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Eat your heart out, Star of Bethlehem

'Potential comet of the century' set to pass over sky around holidays PAGES 16 & 17

Watch out for loose seals

Rehabbed harbour seal pups are headed back to the wild with satellite transmitters PAGE 8

THERE'S BEEN AN EXPLOSION — OF PUPPIES!?

SHANNON UNLEASHES BOXES OF CANINE JOY INTO THE CUBICLES OF HER CO-WORKERS PAGE 21

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From right: Harley Prosper, a man who did not wish to be identified, Nevlin Corcoran and Dave North sit outside the Union Gospel Mission on Wednesday during the first extreme-weather alert of the season. KATE WEBB/METRO

Shelters jump into action with chilly weather

Alert. Donations needed as sub-zero temperatures strain resources

This week's cold snap has triggered the first extreme-weather alert of the season for Greater Vancouver shelters, which are opening extra spaces and appealing to the public for donations of warm clothing such as gloves and hats.

Irene Jaakson, co-ordinator of the Vancouver Extreme Weather Response (EWR) program, said the sub-zero temperatures prompted her on Tuesday to email dozens of area shelters, warning them to prepare for an influx of people from the street.

"When the weather gets like the conditions that we're seeing right now, last night, tonight and tomorrow night, including our backup locations we have the capacity to open 200 extra spaces," she said Wednesday.

"Now, those are mats on a ground, it's not the regular shelter system, but nobody has been turned away, and in the last few years we've had nobody turned away."

The Union Gospel Mission's (UGM) emergency shelter has been full almost every night since October, a spokeswoman said, but B.C.'s 2-1-1 Shelter and Street Help hotline can assist anyone who is turned away to find other options.

The EWR network has a total of 574 spaces in Greater Vancouver, including the 200 backup spaces.

The City of Vancouver is also expected to announce the locations of its Homeless Emergency Action Team (HEAT) shelters in the next few days, which are usually open by Dec. 1. Last year there were four locations with more than 160 spaces paid for by the city and province.

UGM outreach worker Matt Hislop said gloves, toques, waterproof jackets and sleeping bags are especially needed right now, since the UGM has none left and people have been asking for them.

Volunteers with the Blanket B.C. Society will be collecting donations of blankets and warm clothing along the Canada Line this Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The crews will be accepting socks, scarves, mittens, toques and blankets at eight stations from Waterfront Station to Richmond Brighouse.

People can also drop donations off at the UGM at 601 East Hastings St. from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day. KATE WEBB/METRO

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Council approves 30-year vision for the West End

9-2 vote. Ambitious plan finds passionate support and criticism at marathon meeting

LUKE BROCKI
vancouver@metronews.ca

It's 2041. Vancouver's West End is home to tall towers along arterial streets. Six-storey apartments have replaced off-street parking in alleys and laneways. Both help accommodate the neighbourhood's 10,000 newest residents. Wider sidewalks and patios along the area's three business villages tempt locals to linger in vibrant public spaces before they walk, bike or bus to their affordable character homes.

Back in 2013, it was standing-room only at a marathon meeting in council chambers Wednesday. Nearly 50 speakers had signed up to debate the ambitious vision staff had pitched to the city's finance committee. Their draft plan means to shape land use, economic development, and public amenities and services in one of Vancouver's oldest neighbourhoods over the next 30 years.

Be bold

"This could be Vancouver's Times Square."
John Whistler with the Active Transportation Policy Council

And following 12 hours of public input, amendments to strengthen commitments to seniors and transportation improvements, and much council deliberation — including calls from outgunned NPA and Green councillors to defer the plan — council voted 9-2 to approve it.

The 200-page document bundle was the culmination of extensive community consultations that began in April 2012, said Holly Sovdi, leader of the West End planning team.

"By engaging over 7,000 people directly in the planning process, we feel we were able to talk to a variety of people throughout the community and hear a variety of the concerns and the issues."

Sovdi said the latest draft of the plan addressed a plethora of community concerns, particularly around adding density while preserving character and protecting and expanding market and social housing stock.

Critics, including Randy Helten of the volunteer-run community group West End Neighbours, urged council to reject the plan amid worries over view corridors, a lack of detail around density changes and insufficient public input.

"We should not be distracted by rainbows painted on the streets," Helten said, jabbing at the popular rainbow crosswalk staff had painted in the West End earlier this year. "There's absolutely no reason this should be decided today."

An artist's rendering of the future of Vancouver's West End. COURTESY CITY OF VANCOUVER

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Government announces plan to combat mental-health crisis

Taking action.
Province outlines series of steps intended to address needs of those dealing with severe mental-health issues

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

The province has announced an action plan rife with short-term fixes to respond to what the City of Vancouver calls a mental-health crisis.

Health Minister Terry Lake stood by Mayor Gregor Robertson Wednesday, declaring a number of steps to address the needs of patients with severe addiction and mental illness.

Over the next 120 days, the government expects St. Paul's Hospital to develop a nine to 12-bed psychiatric unit, create a new outreach team in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, fund two new Assertive Community Treatment Teams, improve information-sharing protocols between agencies and form a committee of health, government, police and community stakeholders to work towards long-term solutions.

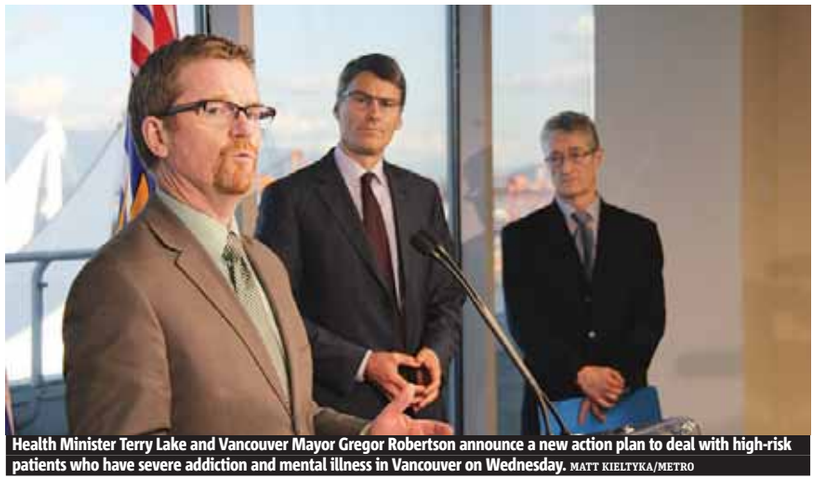
The action plan, expected to cost $20 million annually, also tasks the Provincial Health Services Authority to establish a clinical expert panel, improve access for complex-needs patients to the 100-bed Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addiction, and create a new secure six-bed facility and five high-intensity group homes.

The plan was spawned out of a cry for help from the City of Vancouver and Vancouver police, who said the situation for severely addicted and mentally ill people on the city's streets has reached crisis levels.

Quoted

"You just can't take someone and tell them what's good for them and put them away. It's just not that world anymore."
Health Minister Terry Lake

"There are some immediate actions that address the crisis, but we'll need to follow through on those next steps and ensure we are stabilizing the 300 people who are at highest risk as urgently as possible," said Robertson. "The work we do over the next 120 days, and looking long-term, is really critical."



Health Minister Terry Lake and Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson announce a new action plan to deal with high-risk patients who have severe addiction and mental illness in Vancouver on Wednesday. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Neither party was under the illusion the action plan would address all the difficulties facing untreated patients.

"There's no doubt there's a much bigger piece to move here," said Robertson. "Ensuring people have a secure home to live in and get treatment is the ultimate solution of all of this."

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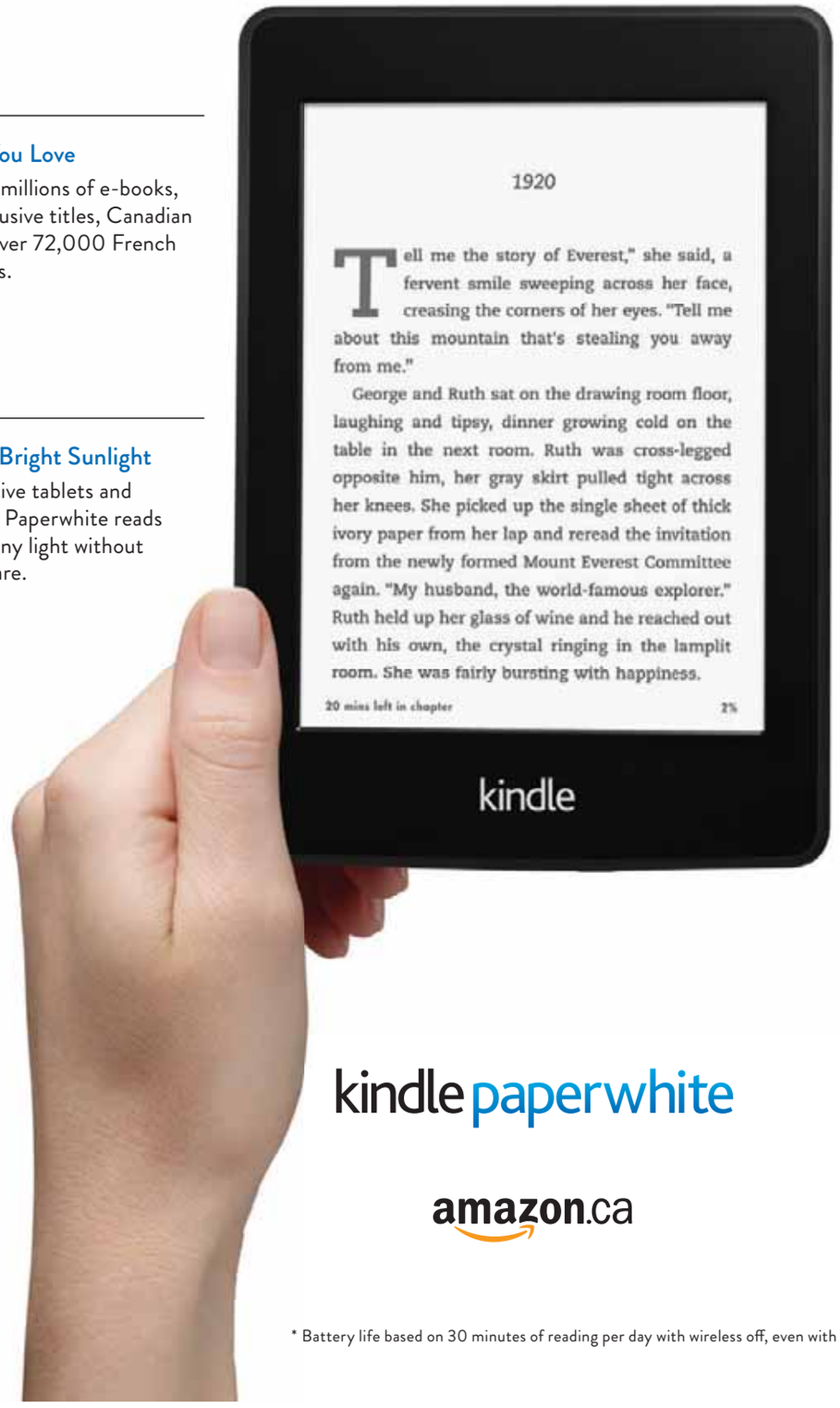
1920
Tell me the story of Everest," she said, a fervent smile sweeping across her face, creasing the corners of her eyes. "Tell me about this mountain that's stealing you away from me."
George and Ruth sat on the drawing room floor, laughing and tipsy, dinner growing cold on the table in the next room. Ruth was cross-legged opposite him, her gray skirt pulled tight across her knees. She picked up the single sheet of thick ivory paper from her lap and reread the invitation from the newly formed Mount Everest Committee again. "My husband, the world-famous explorer." Ruth held up her glass of wine and he reached out with his own, the crystal ringing in the lamplit room. She was fairly bursting with happiness.
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'Do the right thing'

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson urges Rob Ford to step away from limelight

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson is advising embattled Toronto Mayor Rob Ford to step out of the media glare.

Robertson said it would be best if Ford gets out of the limelight, when he was asked for his opinion by reporters during an unrelated media conference on Wednesday.

Robertson said it is up to the Ontario government now to take any action to empower Toronto's city council to deal with the spectacle created by Mayor Ford.

Ford, who admitted to smoking crack cocaine after months of denying it, was stripped of most of his mayoral powers earlier this week by his fellow councillors.

Robertson said it's unlikely a similar situation would occur on the West Coast, and the drama surrounding Ford has not distracted the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Big City Mayors' Caucus from its advocacy work.

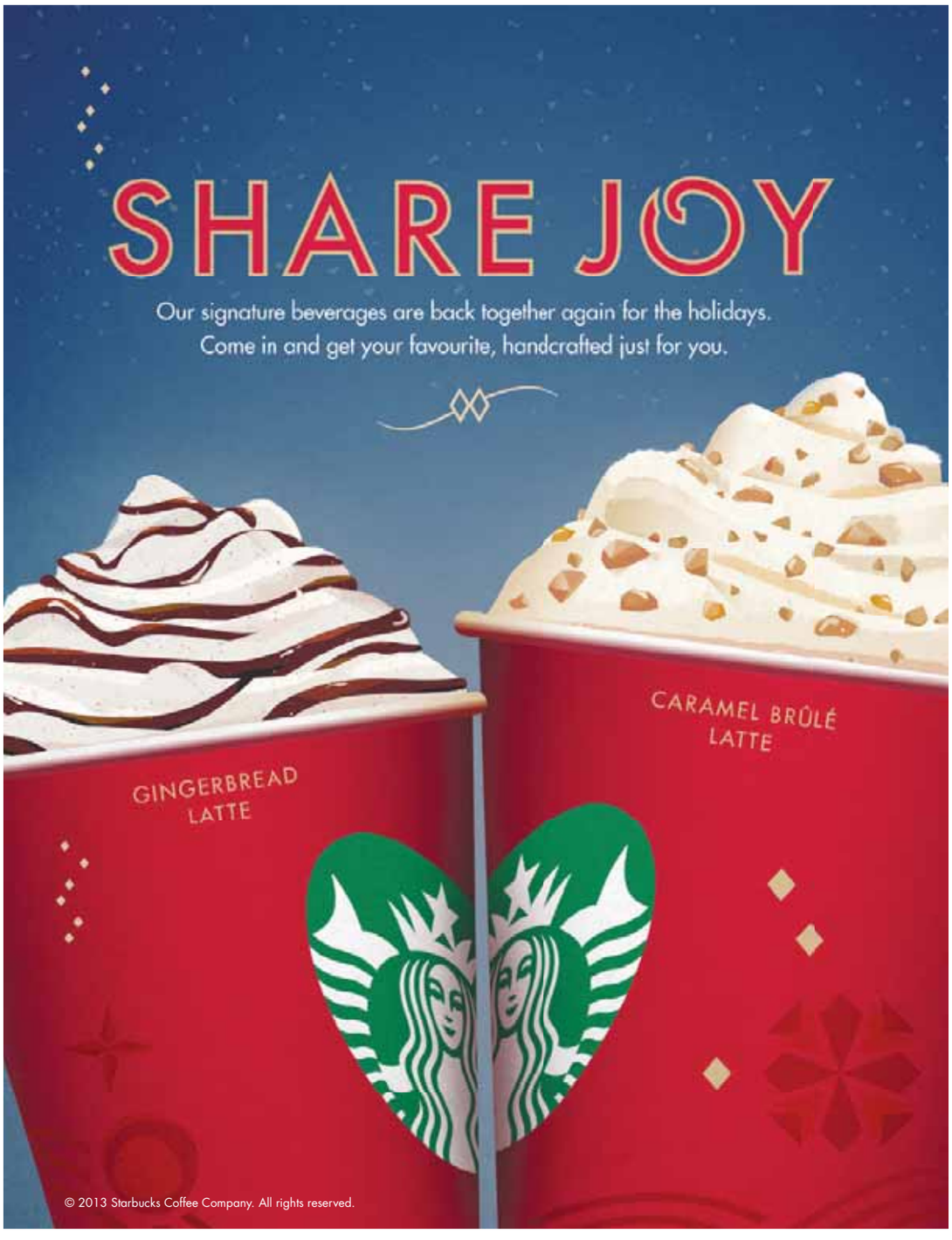
Still, Robertson advises his Toronto counterpart to "do the right thing."

"I think the sooner that the issue is resolved, and Mr. Ford steps out of the limelight, the better for Toronto and the better for Canadian cities," Robertson says.

"It's been a really difficult chapter and I think Mayor Ford needs to do the right thing.

"He's getting a lot of signals to that effect, and I think that will serve his city and our country."

THE CANADIAN PRESS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David Pickton threatened rape, murder, lawsuit claims

Decades ago. Brother of serial killer sexually assaulted woman in '91, according to civil claim

A lawsuit has been launched against David Pickton, the brother of serial killer Robert Pickton, alleging he threatened to kill and rape a woman on a Burnaby construction site more than two decades ago.

The notice of civil claim against Pickton was filed in B.C. Supreme Court Tuesday, alleging he sexually assaulted the woman on a job site in August 1991 and when the assault was interrupted he threatened to rape her later.

The woman alleges in the lawsuit that Pickton came upon her quickly, forced her backwards, trapped her against the wall, pushed his hands down her pants and sexually assaulted her.

The attack was interrupted when an unknown person entered the trailer, the document said.

"Before leaving, Pickton turned around and glared at the Plaintiff, and said, 'I'm going to rape you, I'm going to rape you,'" states the document.

The notice of claim contains allegations not proven in court.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Claims he 'can't remember'

According to the same document, Pickton was convicted of the sexual assault in Burnaby provincial court Feb. 26, 1992.

- "Are you for real," Pickton said in an interview when he was told about the allegations in the lawsuit.

Snowcap selfie

Two women are silhouetted against the snow-covered mountains in Howe Sound at Porteau Cove as they take a picture of themselves Wednesday. Environment Canada is calling for crisp temperatures and sunny skies through to next week. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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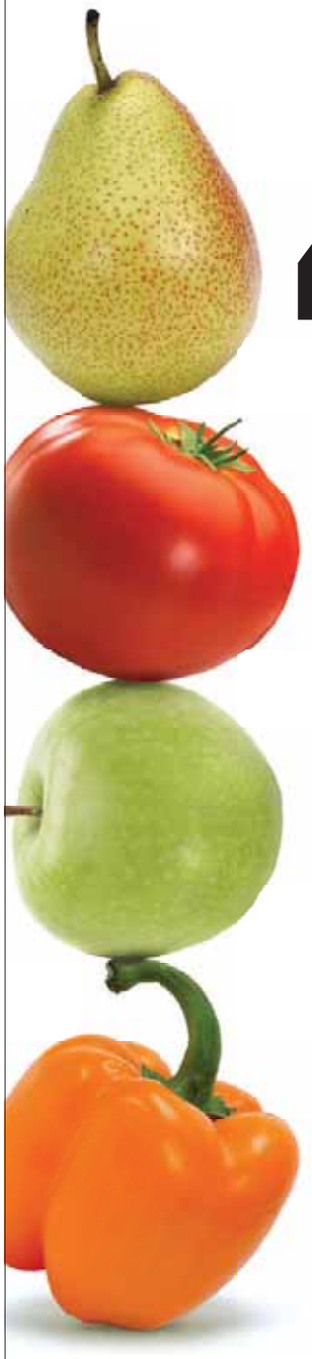

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Aquarium releases seal pups with transmitters

A rehabilitated harbour seal pup is equipped with a satellite tag on its head prior to being released back into the wild.
JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tagging along.
Satellite tracking devices show rescued seals' progress once released

The Vancouver Aquarium has released seven rescued harbour seal pups back into the wild, with plans to track them as they return to the ocean.

Five of the pups were equipped with satellite-linked transmitters that will provide the marine mammal rescue centre with information about where the seals go and how they do after returning to the wild.

Martin Haulena, the aquarium's staff veterinarian, said Wednesday that the information will help the team determine the ideal conditions for release and whether they need to make any changes to their rehabilitation program.

"I want to see how these animals do, and how they do kind of dictates what we do next year. Are there differences or changes that I want to do in their release criteria — release them at different weights? Release them in different areas?" Haulena said just before the animals were released.

They were transported in dog kennels to the ocean front in Porteau Cove, on the Sea to Sky Highway north of Vancouver. After staff opened the kennel doors, the wide-eyed, speckled pups looked around at their entourage for a few minutes before they bounced and squirmed their way into the water.

Under the sea

"I want to see how these animals do, and how they do kind of dictates what we do next year."
Martin Haulena, Vancouver Aquarium veterinarian

The satellite-linked tags, glued to the hair coat on their heads like high-tech Mohawk haircuts, cost about $1,500 each and about $200 a month to monitor. They have a battery life of about a year, but may fall off well before then.

"They might only last a few weeks but we have had them last about 280 days before," Haulena said.

The tags will transmit location data to researchers, allowing them to track the distribution, longevity and distance travelled by the pups.

Last year, the aquarium tracked five rehabilitated seal pups the same way, but that group was released in a more remote, sparsely populated area.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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‘B.C. bud’ cost down as U.S. legality up

Legalization. Washington, Colorado have legalized pot

After years of being high, marijuana prices have started to come down in B.C.

Dana Larsen, a pro-pot activist and medical marijuana dispensary owner, says prices have dropped by about 20 per cent since Washington state and Colorado voted to legalize pot last year.

“We’ve definitely seen our prices drop,” he said. “There’s just less demand.”

A year ago, a gram of marijuana at one of Larsen’s dispensaries would cost about $10. Now, it’s closer to $8. According to Larsen, pot prices in B.C. peaked in the ’90s, when the Canadian dollar was still low and so-called “B.C. bud” was in high demand. Although difficult to track, Larsen said illegal exports of marijuana have slowed in recent years as more and more states introduced medical marijuana legislation.

Legalization measures south of the border have only accelerated the trend.

“Nobody is going to want to smuggle B.C. bud across the border when they can purchase something homegrown at a local shop,” Larsen said.

Overall, Larsen expects the “downward pressure” on prices to continue.

“I want prices to be lower. I think marijuana should cost $2 a gram,” he said. “If we want to eliminate the black market, any kind of legal system has to charge less than the black market.” **LUKE SIMCOE/METRO IN VICTORIA**

Dana Larsen is campaigning for pot legalization in B.C. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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Attempted kidnapping. Footage shows suspect

Mounties in Richmond have released a video of a man who may be linked to the attempted kidnapping of a five-year-old boy and his father.

The footage shows a man with short, dark hair, a beard and a moustache leaving the victim’s building last August, and police hope a member of the public can identify him.

RCMP say the man could have worked with two other men who have already been charged in the case. The mystery man is one of two unidentified suspects spotted by a witness, who called police while watching four men force the victim, at gunpoint, into a car where his little boy was already strapped into a car seat.

Officers stopped the vehicle a short time later and released the child and his dad.

Nineteen-year-old Raymond Truong and 27-year-old Ryan Stalker are charged with kidnapping, while the search for the other two suspects continues. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

A video shows a man who may be linked to an attempted kidnapping. COURTESY RCMP

Ailing man killed in alley. Second man convicted

A man with ties to a white supremacist group in Calgary has been convicted of second-degree murder for the random killing of an ailing man.

A jury found Robert Reitmeier, 25, guilty in the beating death of Mark Mariani. Mariani was walking down an alley when he was savagely kicked and stomped on Oct. 3, 2010.

The 47-year-old was frail with Crohn’s Disease and unable to defend himself.

Tyler Sturrup, 28, who helped found the Western European Bloodline supremacist group, had earlier pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the death. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Refurbished

SkyTrain cars back on tracks

TransLink has breathed new life into its aging fleet of SkyTrain cars as the first refurbished vehicle returned to service Wednesday.

The 114 Mark I SkyTrain cars began service in 1986 and have reached the end of their designed life of 25 years. However, their lifespans are being extended by 15 years at a cost of $37.9 million. **MATT KIELTYKA/METRO**

Lower Mainland

B.C. to fund cycling infrastructure

The provincial government is offering up $640,000 in new funding for Lower Mainland communities interested in linking their cycling paths and bike lanes to the B.C.-wide Gateway Program cycling network.

Cities are being encouraged to apply online and must prove their proposals would benefit the community and contribute to physical activity and health. **MATT KIELTYKA/METRO**

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The Duffy scandal: Now RCMP say PM's ex-aide broke the law

That $90,000 cheque. 'My actions were lawful,' Nigel Wright says as Mounties issue explosive new findings

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's former chief of staff is facing fresh allegations he broke the law by cutting a $90,000 cheque to Sen. Mike Duffy.

But Nigel Wright is fighting back with a statement that insists he was only acting in the best interests of taxpayers and he did nothing wrong.

A new document from RCMP Cpl. Greg Horton says Wright "did, without the consent in writing of the head of the branch of government, pay a reward or confer an advantage or benefit on Mike Duffy."

Horton also says Wright and Duffy "did commit breach of trust in connection with the duties of their offices," contrary to a section of the Criminal Code.

The documents also indicate Wright told the Mounties that Harper was unaware of his decision to personally pay back Duffy's ineligible expense claims.

In a statement issued by his lawyer, Peter Mantas, Wright denies all wrongdoing. "My intention was always to secure repayment of funds owed to taxpayers," the statement reads.

"I acted within the scope of my duties and remain confident that my actions were lawful. I have no further comment at this time."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nigel Wright allegedly wrote: "We are good to go from the PM." SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

New RCMP filings

What did the PM know?

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper repeatedly told the Commons the RCMP had found "no evidence" he knew of the Wright repayment deal.

What the RCMP said, however, was that Harper was informed by his staff they were working on a plan to have Duffy repay.

"I have seen no evidence to suggest that the prime minister was personally involved in the minutiae of those matters," says lead investigator Cpl. Greg Horton.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New blow to Rob Ford? A class-action lawsuit

Ford has tarnished the city's brand, lawyer says. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A new website has been launched to recruit claimants for a class-action lawsuit against disgraced Toronto Mayor Rob Ford.

The site claims he was negligent and acted in bad faith in his role as mayor.

"I'm sick and tired of it. Enough is enough. I can't handle it any more. I can't sit on the couch and do nothing," said Toronto lawyer Jose Rodrigues, who launched stoprob.org.

"I'm trying to gather forces and move it ahead."

To proceed to court, the claim would need to have a lead plaintiff and then be approved by a judge.

In a draft statement of claim posted on the website, Rodrigues, a fresh graduate from the University of Ottawa law school, is seeking $5.2 million in total damages — approximately a dollar for each Toronto resident in general plus a dollar each in punitive damages.

The plaintiffs will include residents of Toronto "whose reputation has been negatively impacted by the defendant's admission to smoking crack cocaine coupled with his refusal to resign."

Within 30 minutes of the launch of the website, Rodrigues said "dozens" of people signed up as potential plaintiffs to represent other Torontonians in the planned action.

Rodrigues hopes to file it next week.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

High-value brand

Rodrigues, 28, articled in the federal justice department and specializes in civil litigation.

- **Value.** He says the Toronto "brand" is an essential asset of the city, worth millions of dollars. Ford's "drunken stupors" tarnish the value of the brand, he says.

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604-432-9303
Metropolis
604-430-3903
Brentwood Mall
604-320-0789

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Cottonwood Mall
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1795 Robson St.
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Travelling home difficult for obese man

Tough journey. Man with genetic illness was repeatedly refused transport from U.S.

Kevin Chenais, who weighs 500 pounds, says he has been repeatedly refused transport over the past two weeks as he sought to get home to France from the United States.

It began when British Airways refused to honour his return ticket from the U.S., where he had been receiving medical care for a hormone imbalance. BA acknowledges that it refused to let Chenais board the plane, but said confidentiality rules prevent it from saying why.

Chenais was also rejected by Carnival Cruises, who declined to comment. Virgin Atlantic agreed to fly him to London, where he had planned to take the Eurostar train home. But Eurostar refused to allow him on board because of safety rules governing travel through the Channel Tunnel: The high-speed train that connects England to France and Belgium requires all passengers to have the ability to be safely evacuated — and Chenais' obesity-caused lack of mobility made that impossible.

Eurostar paid for Chenais' family's hotel room and worked with P&O Ferries, who accepted Chenais for a trip across the English Channel, offering to take him in an ambulance aboard the Spirit of Britain on Wednesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kevin Chenais sits in his mobility scooter in front of an ambulance at St Pancras in London, Wednesday. KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toxic cargo. Destroying Syria's weapons at sea an option, says watchdog

Destroying Syria's stockpile of poison gas and nerve agents at sea is a possible alternative to finding a country willing to host the destruction, a spokesman for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) said Wednesday.

The organization aims to destroy some 1,300 tonnes of Syrian toxic agents by mid-2014, but the plan was dealt a blow last week when Albania rejected a U.S. request to host the destruction. Authorities in Belgium and Norway also have ruled their countries out as locations for the risky operation.

OPCW spokesman Christian Chartier said the alternative of destruction at sea, on a boat or floating rig, is a "feasible" possibility. Among mobile systems that could be put on a ship and sent to sea is one owned by the U.S. Defence Department.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt

Soldiers killed in bus bombing

Two suicide bombers rammed an explosive-laden car into a convoy of buses carrying off-duty soldiers in Egypt's turbulent region of Sinai, killing 11 and wounding 37, security and military officials said Wednesday.

The bombing is the latest in a wave of attacks in a burgeoning insurgency in northern Sinai blamed on Islamic militants. The conflict has mounted since the military's ouster of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi in July.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Wednesday's attack, but suicide car bombings are a signature method of militant groups linked to or inspired by al-Qaida.

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COSMIC GIFT: THE SNOW

A galactic visitor, travelling hundreds of thousands of kilometres an hour, will soon catapult around the sun and — if it lives up to all the hype and survives the journey — may give us the show of a lifetime; an early Christmas gift from the cosmos. Discovered just over a year ago, ISON has the potential to be the 'comet of the century,' lighting up the night, perhaps even visible during the day, as it streaks across the sky on its way out of our solar system.

DEAN LISK
Metro in Toronto

When it comes to outer space, and how things get from Point A to Point B in the universe, comets — with their elongated orbits — open up a world of wonder.

"Some ideas tend to return, like the comets themselves," says Dr. Sara Schechner, author of Comets, Popular Culture, and the Birth of Modern Cosmology, and curator of the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments at Harvard University.

"We went from a period where everyone was afraid of them, to a period where they were viewed as too small to hurt us, and now we are back to, 'We better be watching out for them.'"

Schechner says some in the scientific community have suggested comets may have been responsible for both life and death, speculating they brought the building blocks of life — water and organic chemicals — to Earth and were also responsible, through collisions, for climate change and extinctions.

"When I am reading this in some of the scientific literature it resonates with some of the older beliefs," says Schechner, who adds that for thousands of years, anything not planned — like the sudden appearance of a comet — was greeted as an omen.

"People thought of comets as having a divine purpose," says Schechner. "Some thought they were divinely created and appeared in the sky when God wanted to send people a message about what they should be doing, or as a warning, or to announce a big event. And it could be a good event, but mostly they were terrible things, like a plague, the death of your king, war, revolution."

Others thought comets were the result of elements excreted from the earth that caught fire in the sky and caused terrible things to happen, such as a bad harvest or disease. "If you breathed in anything from them, you could come down with the plague. They caused revolution because they were hot and dry and kindled anger in people.

"People at the time didn't think of them as some kind of dirty snowball hurling around."

So what is a comet? Basically, they are big, dirty snowballs. That is what scientific enlightenment, starting with Isaac Newton, Edmund Halley and others, has taught us. Its birth takes place in the Oort cloud, a hypothesized area roughly a light-year from our sun, says Robyn Foret, an amateur astronomer with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

The cloud may seem far away, but it is close enough on a galactic scale that gravitational forces from our sun — and even other stars — have an impact, forcing dust, water and gases to clump together to form a nucleus, Foret says. Eventually, gravity may also send it falling toward our sun — like Comet ISON, which is about to journey behind our biggest star.

"So, if you can imagine this clump of water, ice and different gases and dust falling towards the sun, as it gets closer to it, it starts to warm up a bit," he says, adding the lighter gases will escape from the nucleus, and form a coma — a fizzy glow — around the object. As the comet travels closer to the sun, it heats up even more. The ice begins to evaporate and a tail will start to form as more gases and dust escape.

Schechner says it was Newton and Halley who really showed comets were part of our solar system and not supernatural at all. Still, they didn't leave all the old superstitions behind.

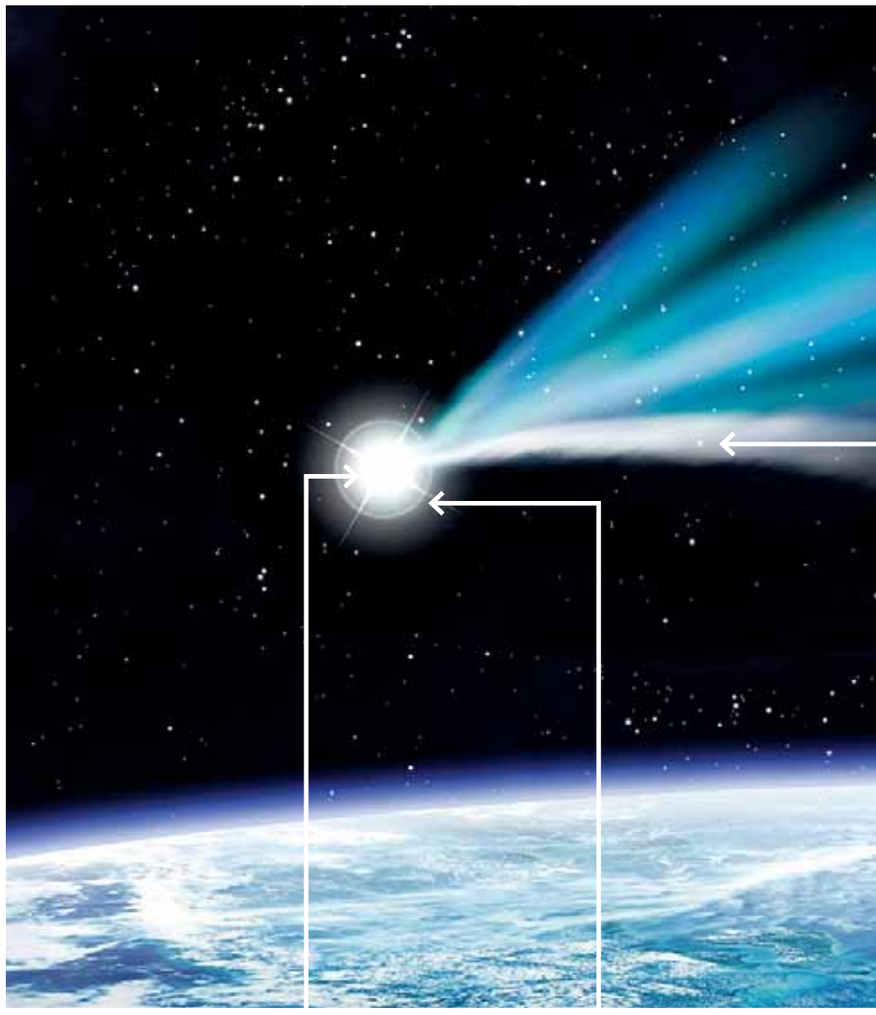
"They were too good to get rid of," she says. "Newton says, 'Well, when a comet passes, its tail replenishes this vital spirit necessary for respiration and life on Earth. And, comets are dropping off supplies of water, without which the Earth would just dry up."

Schechner says Newton and Halley also speculated comets could cause the end of the world in various ways and were responsible for earlier upheavals — something modern scientists also examine.

"They aren't thinking of it in terms of omens, they are thinking of it in terms of physics," she says. "But they don't think it's some preordained plan."

Name that comet

ISON is named after the Russian-based organization that discovered it: The International Scientific Optical Network.



Not sure what you are looking at? Robyn Foret, an amateur astronomer and chair of the education and public outreach committee of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, breaks down the anatomy of a comet.

Nucleus

The dirty snowball, the nucleus is made up of dust, ice and gases. "The nucleus can be anywhere from three to 30 kilometres. Someone coined the phrase that it's a 'city-sized object,' and I like that, because cities come in different sizes. You can relate to the size of a city," says Foret.

Coma

The coma, formed by the loss of gas and dust, appears around the nucleus as it nears the sun. It can be tens of thousands of kilometres in size. "In the early days, ISON was losing 60,000 pounds of dust every minute," says Foret.

Timeline

Comet culture

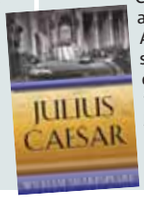
The history of comets makes for some interesting reading, with beauty, tragedy and intrigue. Here are some highlights from popular culture, including some of author Sara Schechner's celestial favourites.

28 million years B.C.

Diamonds. Scientists recently announced they believe they discovered evidence a comet crashed into the Sahara Desert in an area bordered by Egypt and Libya roughly 28 million years ago. The proof, they reported, was a black pebble that contained small diamonds created by the impact.

43 B.C.

Caesar. A comet was seen after the killing of Julius Caesar. "His adopted son, Augustus, who succeeded him, exploited it, saying it was a sign of Julius's soul taken up into heaven," Schechner says.



1066

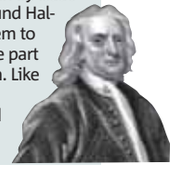
Omen. The Bayeux Tapestry, which commemorates the Norman conquest of England, includes a depiction of Halley's Comet. People are seen warning King Harold the comet is a bad omen. Below the comet is a depiction of a fleet setting sail to invade England.

1577

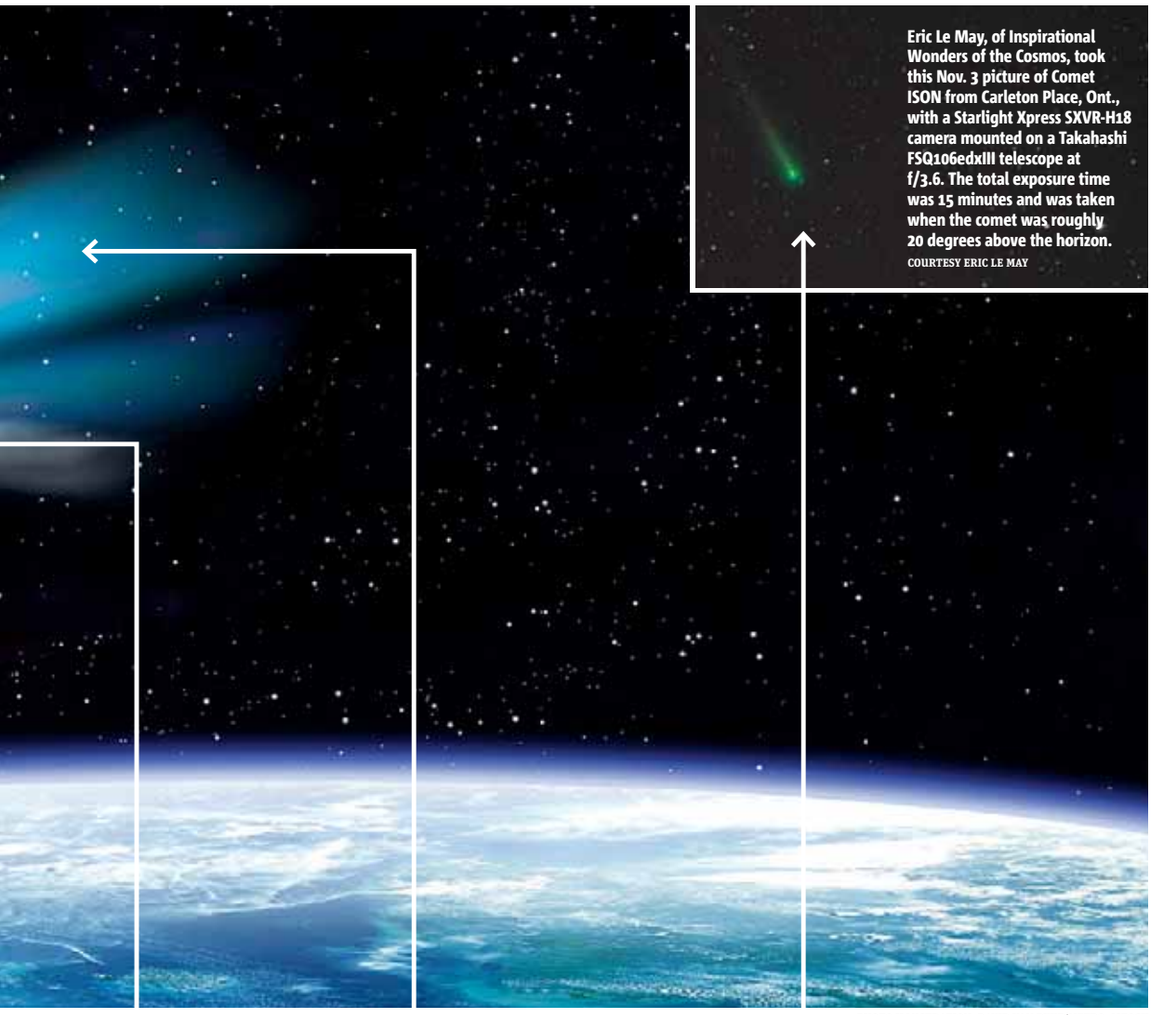
Brahe. A bright comet, seen across Europe, was observed by a number of enlightened minds, including Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe. His observations showed theories about the order of planets, moons and objects in our solar system were wrong and had to be rethought.

1680

Sungrazer. Called a Great Comet (there have been a few) and seen in daylight, this comet was seen by Isaac Newton and Edmund Halley and helped them to prove comets were part of the solar system. Like ISON, it was also a sungrazer and had a very long tail.



BALL COMETH



Eric Le May, of Inspirational Wonders of the Cosmos, took this Nov. 3 picture of Comet ISON from Carleton Place, Ont., with a Starlight Xpress SXVR-H18 camera mounted on a Takahashi FSQ106edxIII telescope at f/3.6. The total exposure time was 15 minutes and was taken when the comet was roughly 20 degrees above the horizon.
COURTESY ERIC LE MAY

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO; ISTOCK

Ion tail

Formed of lighter gases, dust and evaporating ice, the ion tail is pushed away from the nucleus by the sun's solar winds. "Regardless of the path of the comet, that gas tail will always be directly opposite the sun," says Foret, who adds the tail can be millions of kilometres long.

Dust tail

Heavier dust particles left behind by the comet will create the dust tail, which will follow the orbit of the comet. "It is like you are driving down a dirt road and there is a cloud of dust that settles behind you," says Foret. If the Earth's orbit passes through this tail, the result is a meteor shower.

Feeling the heat

ISON will pass closest to the sun on Thursday, Nov. 28.

ISON is set to pass about 1.8 million km away.

- **This is called the perihelion.** Foret says the sun is about 1.4 million kilometres in diameter and

- **One time only.** While some comets return after a short number of years, others, like ISON, will be flung out of our solar system.

ISON

The 'comet of the century'

ISON has caused a lot of interest in the astronomical community since it was discovered in September of last year. When it was first discovered some 700 million kilometres away, it appeared brighter than most comets do at that distance from the sun. This had astronomers theorizing it may become one of the brightest objects in the sky when it passes, and might even be visible in daylight.

"It might be the greatest object I will have seen in my lifetime up to now," says Gary Boyle, an amateur astronomer based near Ottawa. "The hype really has been strong in the astronomical community and is based on the idea of a naked-eye comet seen during the day that could be brighter than the full moon. But, with more observation, it may not be that bright — as in being able to be seen during the day — but it will be a fantastic comet."

How to see it

1 Telescope: You will be able to see the head of the comet, the nucleus — the brighter part in the middle — and only a portion of the tail.

2 Binoculars: You will see less detail than with a telescope, but because it will magnify the comet less, you will get a wider view, and see more of the tail.

3 Naked eye: As the comet gets closer, and depending on its brightness, you will be able to see it without any help. Unlike a solar eclipse, this is one celestial show you can watch.

WARNING: Do not look at ISON with binoculars or a telescope when it is in close proximity to the Sun, as an accidental glimpse of the sun through either will cause permanent eye damage.

Where to see it

- **Look east in the morning and ISON can be seen very briefly low in the sky.** It will soon pass below the horizon and out of view as it makes its journey behind the sun.
- **If it survives its trip around the sun, ISON will reappear in the eastern sky starting around the early morning of Dec. 9 or 10.** As the month progresses it will be visible in the western sky at night. It will come closest to Earth — roughly 85 million kilometres away — around Dec. 26.

- **Need some help?** Longpaw has created Comet ISON 2013, an iTunes and iPad app featuring a countdown clock, videos, data and charts. Distant Suns has created Comet Watch, where you can use your Apple device to help locate the comet in the sky. ISON C/2012 S1 Finder is an Android app that will also point out the comet in the sky.

1682

Halley's Comet. This was the year that Halley identified the short-period comet that bears his name, and also worked out that the comet would be visible from Earth every 75 to 76 years. The comet last passed in 1986 and is expected to return in 2061.

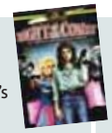
1744

Multi-tail-ented. A comet with six — yes, count them, six — tails was seen in the sky. "I would have loved to have seen that," says Schechner. The comet was observed in Europe and also in New England.

1843

Millerites. "The Millerites, a religious sect in New England, believed the end of the world was going to be predicted by a meteor storm and that a big comet would come.... And, wouldn't you know it, a big comet did come," says Schechner. "They prepared for the second coming, but obviously that didn't happen."

Mid 1980s



Films. Halley's Comet's visit in 1986 was heralded with two disaster-predicting films. Lifeforce (1985) featured a vampire-carrying space ship in the comet's coma, while Night of the Comet (1984) found the world's population wiped out by a comet; with the exception of, like, two Valley Girls.

1994

Drops on Jupiter. In a spectacular scene, Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 broke apart and crashed into Jupiter. This was the first time a comet collision was observed by scientists as it happened, and offered an unprecedented opportunity to collect data.

1997

Hale-Bopp. "Probably the most beautiful (comet) I have seen in my life is Hale-Bopp," says Schechner. "It was very beautiful, very nice." The comet also gained notoriety because members of the Heaven's Gate cult committed suicide as it passed, believing they would reach a UFO travelling in the comet's tail.

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New bill aims to keep 'intimate images' private

Cyberbullying casualties.
Canadians have been touched by suicides of Todd Loik in Saskatchewan and Rehtaeh Parsons in Nova Scotia

Justice Minister Peter MacKay
THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Conservative government has introduced a wide-ranging bill designed to make it illegal to distribute "intimate images" without consent and easier to get such images scrubbed off the Internet.

The proposed law includes tentacles that touch on everything from terrorism and organized crime to stealing cable TV — measures Justice Minister Peter MacKay said are necessary due to the digital nature of the crimes.

"This is the type of crime that really knows no borders," MacKay said Wednesday as he and Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney announced the legislation.

"Once (an image is) on the Internet, once it's been uploaded, it has the ability to go viral. We need to also empower the police to have the tools to track and preserve and present information (to the courts)."

The government bills the legislation as part of its commitment to help put an end to the kind of online exploitation and harassment that has led a number of Canadian youth to take their own lives in recent years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If you're going to wake up during the night, make sure it's for a good reason.
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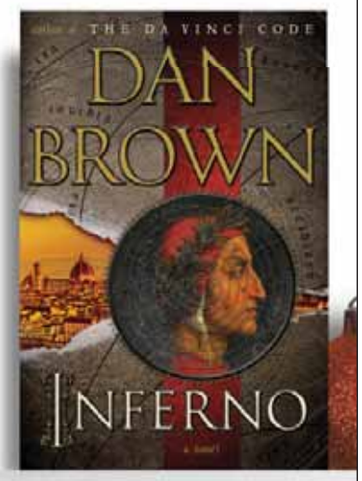
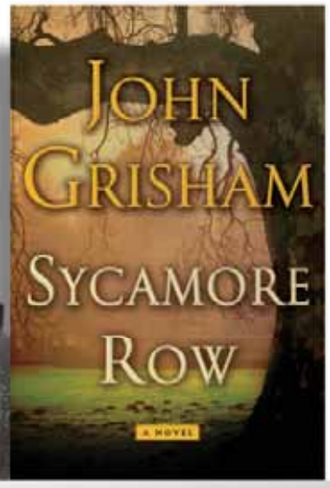


History and mystery collide, and Robert Langdon is caught in the middle.

~~$30~~ now $18!*



The master of the legal thriller returns to the world of *A Time To Kill*.

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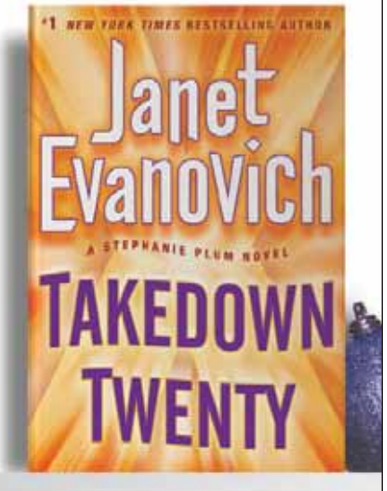

If Stephanie Plum doesn't take down a notorious mob boss, he may take her out.

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PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE
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Mark Darcy and Bill Cosby may have paved the way for it, but these days savvy entrepreneurs are cashing in on the hipster trend of wearing icky Christmas sweaters. Holiday Rejects Apparel co-owner Adil Hooda, left, and manager Jack Hsu show off some of the tacky knitwear they are selling this season. STEPHANIE DUBOIS/METRO IN EDMONTON

Don we now our ugly apparel, fa la la la la

Deck Canadians with hideous sweaters. 'Tis the season to be jolly, while wearing a garish, intentionally awful top

STEPHANIE DUBOIS
Metro in Edmonton

Coloured lights, pompoms and sequins can be found all in one place this year: On an ugly Christmas sweater.

Holiday Rejects Apparel has what they consider the tackiest sweaters in Edmonton.

"Some people like outrageous, and there's some people who like a little more wintry, but for the most part I have been noticing a lot of people like the big knits," said co-owner Adil Hooda, adding one of the ugliest sweaters in the booth is a red knit with furry green circles made to look like a Christmas tree.

What began as an online store last year grew to become retail stores in Edmonton and Calgary this season, after Holiday Rejects Apparel realized people wanted to try on the tacky sweaters before buying.

Starting at $30, the kiosk has sweaters and vests with most of the Christmas season classic characters, including one with a knitted reindeer and another with sequined nutcrackers.

"Everybody has their own Christmas sweater for them, it's just a matter of digging through them, trying some on. It's always a fun time selling people an ugly Christmas sweater," said Hooda.

Canadians can purchase a sweater at holidayrejects.ca.

Random biz fact of the day

50%

Nearly half of employers surveyed bring up salary during initial conversations at the first job interview.
CAREERBUILDER

Market Minute

DOLLAR 95.72¢ (+0.22¢)

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Dow Jones: 15,900.82 (-66.21)

iKeg. How much beer is left in that keg? Now there's an app for that

Beer servers can find out in real time how many pints of their customers' favourite brews are left with the help of an app on their smartphones or tablets.

Steve Hershberger, CEO of SteadyServ Technologies, says he wants to eliminate the guesswork of how much beer is left in kegs to help bars and restaurants keep track of their inventory with his iKeg system, which has a sensor and an app.

"How much beer is left in a keg due to guessing and shaking?" asks Hershberger, who's based in Carmel, Ind., and is courting beer distributors, breweries, bars and restaurants.

"You can't see inside the keg. It's this heavy and unwieldy thing."

Hershberger estimates there are about 20 pints of beer left unsold in each keg, wasting thousands of litres of beer.

A new app aims to help bar staff know when beer is running low. DAVE MARTIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hershberger's iKeg system uses a sensor that goes under a beer keg to keep track of how many pints are left through changes in pressure. The information is sent wirelessly to the app.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Douglas Coupland

Douglas Coupland's latest novel, Worst. Person. Ever., is available from Random House Canada.

Day 14

metronews.ca/temp

Family planning

Workers feeling those baby blues

Having children is a big commitment that costs both time and money.

Temporary workers who can't earn a stable income and have no set work schedule often delay starting a family, according to United Way Toronto and McMaster University's "It's More than Poverty: Employment Precarity and Household Well-being" report.

The study also found that those in temporary employment are less likely to have children living at home compared to permanent workers.

Among those aged 24 to 53, 34 per cent of permanent workers have children living at home, compared to 20 per cent for temporary workers.

PHOEBE HO/FOR METRO

GETTY IMAGES

Temp Makes Lemonade from Lemons

OK, the nice thing about being a temp is that if you screw up, you leave, but you were going to leave anyway, so it's no big deal. I suppose this is true for anybody with a job, but for temps it's just more out in the open.

After almost no sleep I arrived at work only to find gossip and fear-mongering. The worst gossip was that Danimal was in a coma, when, in fact, he was in a $20,000-a-day hotel with a slightly collapsed left lung and an unhelpful feeling-sorry-for-himself attitude. Sarah No. 1 walked up to me at my desk and said, "I guess we were all behaving badly yesterday."

I was incensed: "I was doing no such thing! I was there just to listen to Dan vent about the warehouse fire! You're the one who got a room."

Sarah winked at me. "Have it your way. Here's a pile of files that need alphabetizing."

Ugh. I decided my day desperately needed some cheer, so I phoned my sister's friend who breeds golden labs. We had a quick chat, and just before lunchtime, she arrived with two blue plastic storage tubs filled with puppies. I ushered her into the admin area. In a loud crisp voice I shouted, "Oh no! There's been an explosion!"

Everyone looked stunned ...

"That's right — an explosion of cute! Hilda, release the hounds!"

Ahhh ... the puppy bomb — is there any greater experience in life? Eighteen chubby bundles of YouTubeable romping joy demanding nothing except unconditional love — and snacks. Everybody got down on the floor, and it took only a minute for people to learn that the person with the most food is the one who gets the most puppy, so in came the lunch bags. I was proud to have brought even the smallest dab of joy to the otherwise dreary lives of the soon-to-be-fired full-time staff. Yes, I was proud of myself for firmly turning the day around.

Ahhh ... the puppy bomb ... Eighteen chubby bundles of YouTubeable romping joy demanding nothing except unconditional love — and snacks.

The icing on the cake? Outside the building there was a Zombie Walk with about 200 kids dressed in their finest living dead, headed to a political protest starting outside AmQex next door.

And that's when two things happened: A massive bus, like Bon Jovi on tour, pulled into the parking lot and 50 Chinese people emerged holding measuring tapes, string and clip boards. Then half a minute later about 20 cops arrived to shut down the AmQex protest. "They make engine parts for drones," whispered Sarah.

The Chinese delegate's leader said, "I am most curious to see how protesters are handled in your country."

TO BE CONTINUED ...

Random fact of the day

- There is a new English word created every 98 minutes — or about 14.7 words per day.

SOURCE: OMG-FACTS.COM

Random biz fact of the day

70%

Anything to get the gig — 70 per cent of college students would lie on a resumé to get a job they wanted.

SOURCE: NEXCAREER

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IT'S ABOUT PARTIES, NOT POLITICAL ONES

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Are you sick of talking about Canadian politics? Then let's discuss drinking, gossip and the need for appearances. It'll be a nice change of pace.

Specifically, let's talk about Christmas office parties. Because unlike politicians, Christmas never wears out its welcome. That's why Starbucks' Christmas decorations were rolled out this year just in time for the summer solstice. It's also why holiday events stretch on for weeks of gingerbread-and-icing-laced excess, like an anti-Lent.

I, for instance, have three different work-related Christmas parties coming up. And hooray, because what better way to throw off the shackles of work than to get together with a bunch of people you work with and discuss work? You can just feel yourself unwinding.

Admittedly, footloose behaviour can often be the most memorable element of a Christmas office party. My strongest memory from the first one I went to was Barb the secretary. Barb was the sort of secretary who had an eyeglasses chain, patterned flower dresses, and enough years behind her that she found nothing offensive about the words "Barb" or "secretary."

She was usually very staid, but at this party — well, you think Wrecking Ball was shocking? Some people say things like the Berlin Wall or Paul Henderson are the defining memories of their youth. I have Barb dancing on her chair with a rum and Coke in each hand.

Barb's brand of behaviour is why so many etiquette columns advise you to attend a party full of food, drink and friends and then nibble, sip and mumble your way through the night, because "you're being watched by your superiors at all times." What fun!

Well, I say deck that advice right in the halls. If I'm going to attend three of these things this year, then I'm going to Be Like Barb even as I remain a gracious guest.

Here are a few office-party etiquette tips I've come up with that will allow you to embrace the Christmas spirit(s).

- Most experts advise you shouldn't have more than two alcoholic drinks with office buddies, so bring an enormous canister to drink from.
- Kissing a co-worker is always a grey area, so remember that mistletoe provides full diplomatic immunity, as is written in the Geneva Convention.
- If The Christmas Shoes, Simply Having a Wonderful Christmas Time or Jingle Bell Rock come over any sound system, you will be within your rights to end the party and burn the building to the ground. Dignity demands it.
- Show superiors your work ethic, even in a casual setting, by working extra hard in the rumour mill.
- Remember that if you get blackout drunk you shouldn't worry about what happened, because everyone will record it on their cellphones anyway.
- Perhaps most important — don't overstay your welcome, especially if your hosts are hinting strongly that it's time to go.

Which would normally bring us back to Canadian politics, but I'm sick of talking about it, so let's move on. It's in the past and what's done and done. Besides, if politicians' ifs and buts were candy and nuts, every day would be Christmas.

ZOOM

No word from PM as activists charged

GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec protesters demand action

A Greenpeace activist protests on top of the Biosphere in Montreal, Wednesday, calling for the release of his colleagues who are being held in Russia on various charges including piracy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harper?

- A Greenpeace spokesman says the group is surprised by the silence of the Harper government, which it says still has not publicly intervened to denounce the attitude of the Russian government in the arrests.

One Canadian still in Russian prison

The three Greenpeace protesters who scaled Montreal's Biosphere structure Wednesday will face criminal charges.

They came down on their own and surrendered to police after several hours perched from the federally owned dome.

Two Canadians were among the 28 Greenpeace activists arrested by Russian authorities during a protest at a Gazprom oil-drilling platform in the Arctic Circle in October.

One of the two Canadians — Alexandre Paul — remains behind bars while Paul Ruzycki was granted bail earlier this week. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Bob Dylan's camp finally got around to releasing an official video for Like a Rolling Stone. Gathering no moss, the ultra-modern clip for the 1965 song is a wacky interactive experience of channel surfing through celebrities and humble folk alike. See it for yourself at video.bobdylan.com, and check out these others too.

Bob Dylan GETTY IMAGES

Arcade Fire – Reflektor:
The sartorially demanding band are old hands at the interactive video game, debuting the trick with a childhood-mining experience for We Used To Wait (thewildernessdowntown.com) in 2010. Reflektor provides a similarly personal stamp, this time allowing you to use a phone or tablet to become a passenger on a woman's adventures in Haiti. (justareflektor.com)

Death By Chocolate — Tell Me What You See:
A conundrum. How to make a largely forgettable modern rock song stand out from the crowd? The answer is deceptively simple, of course. Allow mouse-wielding sadists to conduct high-concept torture (i.e., an aggressive bath from a milk balloon or a flounder to the face) on a helpless man. All in slow motion. (tellmewhatyousee.ch)

The Interactive Saved By The Bell Game:
A very funny 16-bit-style slice of choose your own adventure fan fiction. Find out what it's like to be Zack Morris, enduring the pressure of your high school's entire social structure revolving around you for some reason. (youtube.com/thefinebros)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Traffic circles are picking up momentum in Canada because they're safe and good for the environment. What's your take?

@21stCenturyLeft: They have to be done right if they're going to be implemented. Size matters with traffic circles.

@monahb: we have (two) nearby and they are just great. Took a while for some drivers to figure them out.

@Breezy_Liz: try driving in the #UK come back and sigh #OhCanada! Our roads are fabulous! #crossroads

@DerickONeill: we have them in Ireland they are an absolute nightmare. Some have lights right beside them so cars get backed up on

@bzalu: they are joke (a) in Winnipeg, intersections are not large enough to accommodate .

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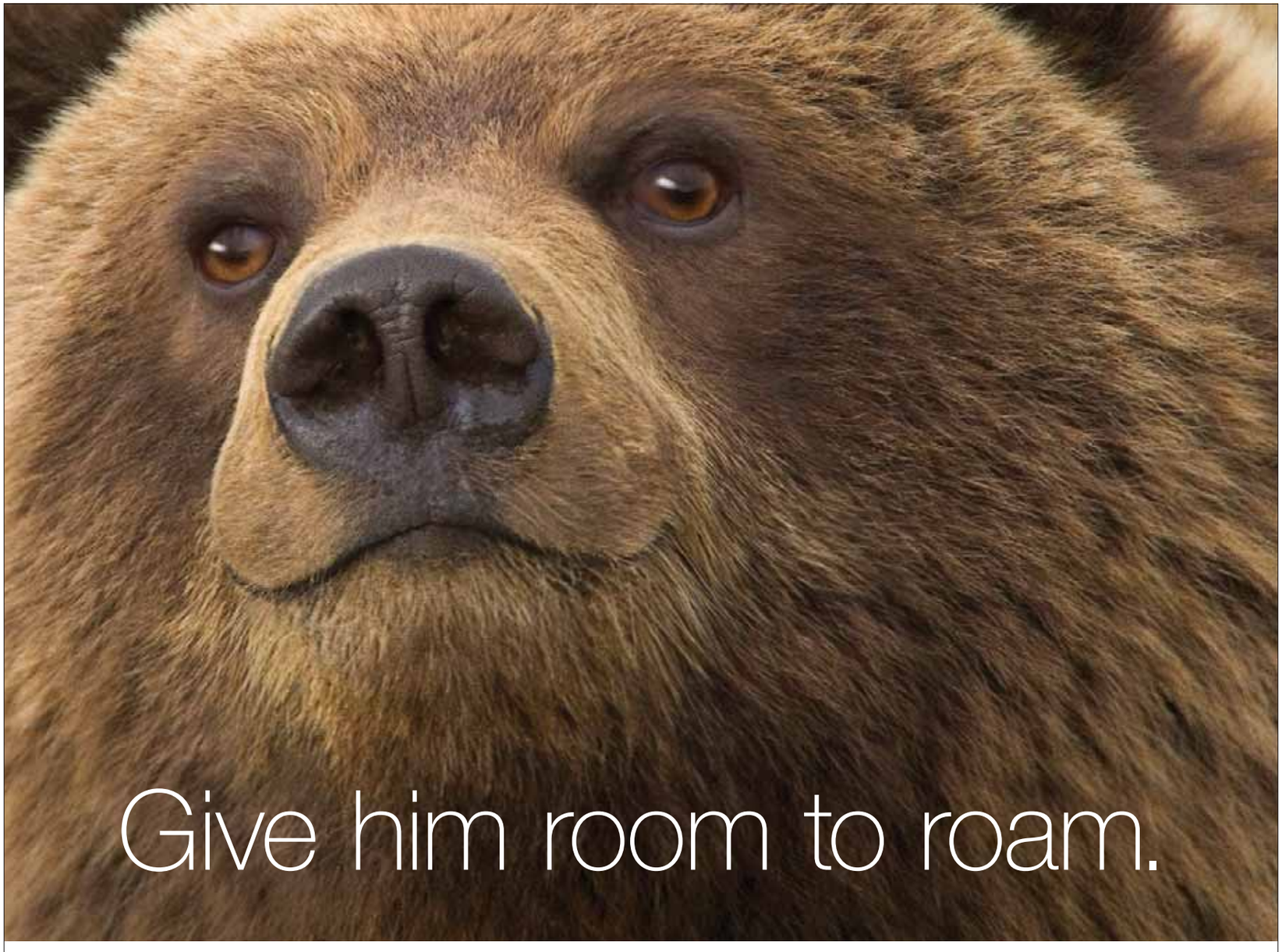

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Dances for a Small Stage to make point at the Emerald

Scaling down. Producers of original are returning with a multi-disciplinary spinoff which will pair musicians with dancers

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Attention dance lovers — Dances for a Small Stage is back. Well, kind of.

MovEnt, the producer of the Small Stage series, is set to launch a new multidisciplinary spinoff at the end of this month called Small Stage point 5. This new endeavor pairs dance artists with local music talent on the company's signature eight foot by eight foot stage, with its inaugural instalment featuring an experimental collaboration between five dancers and five musicians.

The talent includes: Lead singer/songwriter of Mother Mother Ryan Guldemond paired with contemporary dance artist and choreographer Jen McLeish; musician C.R. Avery with dancer Hayden Fong; Corbin Murdoch, lead singer/guitarist of the Nautical Miles with dancer Lina Fitzner; and experimental electro-pop artist Stafana Fratila and dancer Karissa Barry.

"Vancouver is brimming with some of the world's brightest and most innovative dancers and musicians. There's such a need in the community for a place where artists can experiment, create and perform innovative works in front of an audience," says MovEnt artistic producer Julieanne Saroyan.

"This new series is all about the endless relationship between music and dance. It speaks to MovEnt's role in the community to bring people together on all levels to develop artistic partnerships and connect audiences."

Details

When, where and how much? Small Stage point 5 is at the Emerald (555 Gore Ave.) in Chinatown on Nov. 29 and 30. Tickets are $20 (show only – 9 p.m.) and $45 (dinner and show – 7 p.m.). More information at movent.ca.

For the attention of music fanatics ...

Regardless it will rock! Who cares if no bands have been announced? Pemberton Music Festival early bird presale starts tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., with a portion of the proceeds from sales going toward the Movember Foundation. Prices start at $199, plus $89 for a camping or shuttle pass. Visit pembertonmusicfestival.com.

Dancer Karissa Barry is teamed up with electro-pop artist Stafana Fratila in Small Stage point 5, a multidisciplinary spinoff at the Emerald on Nov. 29 and 30. CONTRIBUTED

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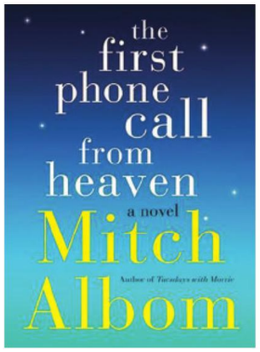
EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News



Tuesdays with Morrie author Mitch Albom isn't a fan of texting. "We text, we Facebook, we post. We do everything we can to avoid a conversation," Albom tells Metro.

Still, Albom insists that even in a society that prefers communicating digitally, it's a real-life conversation we long for the most. "There are so many people that, when they lose someone, wish they could have one more conversation," he says.

The characters in Albom's latest book, The First Phone Call From Heaven, are given exactly that chance.

The book is about a small town that starts receiving phone calls from heaven. Once the media gets hold of the story, people from all over the world flock to the town, hoping their own cellphones will start ringing. Mostly, the book follows one man who was just released from prison after serving time for a crime he didn't commit. While in prison, his wife died, leaving him to raise his young son alone. When the boy starts asking when mommy is going to call, he can't bear for his son to have false hope, so he sets out to prove the whole thing is a hoax.

The idea for the book came after Albom lost the ability to have a conversation with his mother.

"She suffered a stroke and lost the ability to speak," he says. "It's been more than three years since I've heard her voice. It occurred to me how precious the human voice is and so much of what we associate to a person's personality has to do with their voice. Many people often won't erase voicemails from lost loved ones."

When asked if he could orchestrate any real-life phone calls between heaven and earth, Albom's answer didn't involve presidents, saints or other public figures. Like the backdrop of his books, he'd focus on ordinary people.

"I would try to get every broken heart on earth comforted by one of those calls," he says.

Promoting the book has prompted Albom readers to tell them their own stories about real-life phone calls from heaven.

"One guy told me he got a phone call from his mother. She had died in a car crash, but no one knew yet. She called and told him, 'I'm all right. I'll always be with you. Don't worry.' Then she said she would see his grandmother soon, and a week later, his grandmother died."

For his own part, Albom believes miracles come in all sizes, small and large, and is no stranger to experiencing them himself.

"Oh, I have them all the time. There are so many good things that have happened to me that it can't just be coincidence. I often say there must be a divine intervention at work here."

Mitch Albom's The First Phone Call From Heaven is out now. CONTRIBUTED

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Replicating high school

Interview. Chris Lilley talks about bringing Ja'mie King: Private School Girl to North America and drawing on familiar memories

T. MICHELLE MURPHY
Metro World News

Chris Lilley stars as Ja'mie King in Ja'mie King: Private School Girl. CONTRIBUTED

Fans of Australia's We Can Be Heroes and Summer Heights High are on the edge of their seats anticipating the return of TV's queen bee, Ja'mie King. The ultimate mean girl is now the star of her own Kardashian-style reality series in Ja'mie King: Private School Girl. To learn more about the new show, airing Sundays on HBO, we spoke with comedian Chris Lilley, who created and plays Ja'mie King.

Ja'mie's from We Can Be Heroes and Summer Heights High, but can you tell us what the new series has in store?
So Ja'mie's always been a private school girl, and in Summer Heights High (a mockumentary series about public high school life) she did a term away — but in this one, it's just back to her. It's her last three months of school. She's the school captain, she's on top of the world and bossier than ever. It's sort of put together like a reality show, like she is Kim Kardashian or something. She's got her own show this time, and it's all about her school life and family life. And so it sets up in the first episode that it's about her downfall. It's narrated by Ja'mie and it's all teenage drama and friends issues and boy issues and all of the sort of things that happen in the last few months of school. And, yeah, it's the first time I've done a show that is only about one character, so it's a chance to really get stuck in that world.

If she's on the top of the world right now, does that mean she learned nothing from her visit to public school?
Yeah, she never learns anything, she's just all about herself (laughs). You kinda get the impression at the end of Summer Heights High that it's done nothing, she's still glad she is a private school girl.

Why do you think she's your most popular character?

Chris Lilley is the successful writer behind the character Ja'mie King and its various series. CONTRIBUTED

I don't think she — I don't know if she is. When I go around in public, I have lots of people come up and recognize me from the shows, and I play lots of characters and probably Jonah (from Summer Heights High) and Nathan from Angry Boys are the ones that people would call out, they're more recognizable. I know a lot of people really like Ja'mie — but for a lot of people, she drives them crazy. I don't know; I don't analyze it much, I just do it.

So why is she the subject of your first solo show? Is she your favourite?
I really like her. It's hard, because they are all my favourites. I wanted to do a show about one character, and so it was more like she fit into that idea because she's been in two other shows. And I'd sort of already set up all of these things about her world. I don't know. I just decided it would be fun to focus on her. I wasn't looking at any stats or anything, it was just a fun world. I like to write about all of them, but I was having a moment where I just wanted to write about her.

What does it mean for you that HBO is airing Ja'mie King in North America almost at the same time as it airs in Australia? Usually we get it much later.
It's really good that they're doing that because there is always a six-month delay, and these days it's one world with all the technology so, yeah, it was always a disappointment that six months later American people got to see the show. Now it's only about three weeks after Australia, and it's really great. And they are giving it a great time slot on Sunday nights and HBO is really excited about this one.

Does it also help reduce online piracy?
Yeah, hopefully. I think I'm supposed to care about that, but I just can't. When you make a show you just want people to see it. You want people to be affected by it and to love it and experience it. I don't mind that much, as long as people see it and spread the word. (Pause) I shouldn't be promoting pirating (laughs). I would probably be rich if pirating didn't exist, but, yeah, as long as people see it.

Do you have to tweak the humour of the show to appeal to an international audience?
No, I learned that pretty early on. HBO was really excited about (We Can Be Heroes) and invited me over and said, 'We love what you're doing, can you do an American version? Can you come over and do an American accent?' And then I was like, 'Wouldn't that just take away from what it's all about? I think what you love about it is that it's Australian.' And then they kind of agreed with me and said, 'We're gonna buy the next show that you do.' So they bought Summer Heights High and they aired that — and that had a huge response for them. So I think we both realized that it's making the show here, and not trying to impress people or trying to second-guess what people like, and just being true to what I like, is what's really working. The new show definitely doesn't try to be American or anything. Obviously you're making it for the audience, but the audience is pretty universal.

Last question

What was your own high school experience like?

- **Mirror image?** "Well, my school was actually a private school, so it was very much like Ja'mie's school. And I think I always craved going to a public school. I kinda wanted that more "real" experience. So maybe I'm still trying to deal with that thing with the theme of the show."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

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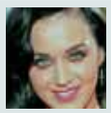
@WhitneyCummings
If I didn't text you back it means I texted someone else by accident

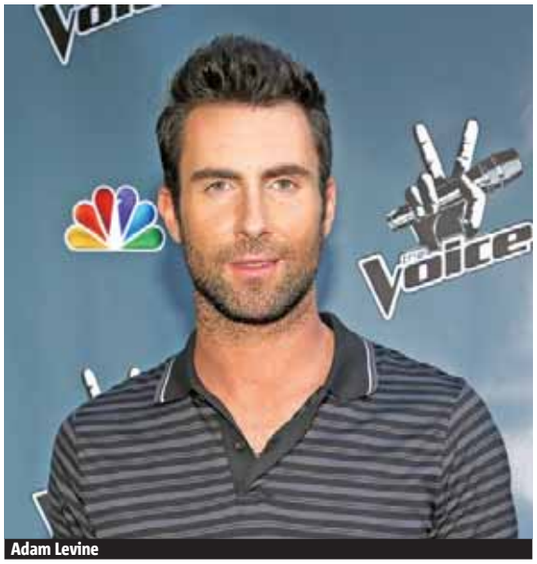


@katyperry
Yes, unconditional love sometimes feels like being hit by a car... Or being on fire... How does it feel to you?

Kelly Clarkson

Santa came through for mom-to-be Kelly

Kelly Clarkson wasn't joking when she said she was planning to get started on that family as soon as possible after marrying Brandon Blackstock last month. The singer took to Twitter this week with some very big news: "I'm pregnant! Brandon and I are so excited! Best early Christmas present ever," she wrote. As recently as Oct. 30, during a radio interview, Clarkson was hinting about her holiday wish list. "Everybody keeps saying, 'What do you want for Christmas?' she said. "And I'm like, 'I want to be pregnant.'"



Adam Levine

Yes Adam it's true, you're this year's Sexiest Man

Look upon him and weep, all ye lesser men, for People has named Adam Levine 2013's Sexiest Man Alive. Channing Tatum, 2012's Sexiest Man Alive, is like dirt to us now.

The Maroon 5 singer has had plenty of chances to drum up votes in his campaign for the office: He's kind of been everywhere this year. He's a judge on The Voice, he's shooting a movie with Keira Knightley called Can a Song Save Your Life? (is it a Maroon 5 song?) and he has a clothing line at Kmart. Serious question: Is it possible to shop at Kmart and buy a piece of clothing not designed by a celebrity? Every single one of them seems to have one.

"As a musician, you have fantasies that you want to win Grammys, but I didn't really think that this was on the table," the singer told People. "I was just amazed and stunned and it almost seemed like they were kidding, but they weren't, so that's cool."

They could still be kidding! Maybe it's a long con. Adam comes in for his cover shoot and just as the shutter snaps, People dumps a bucket of pig's blood over his head. Run, Adam! It's a trap! They're all going to laugh at you! Don't use your telekinetic powers, People magazine's not worth it! **MELINDA TAUB**
MWN IN NYC

Angelina Jolie. ALL IMAGES GETTY

Don't wine about a thing Angie, your life is perfect

Angelina Jolie is having a pretty good week, accolade-wise. The actress and director, who picked up an honorary Oscar at the Governor's Awards earlier this week, also has a hit wine on her hands. Wine Spectator has named the Jolie-Pitt & Perrin Cotes de Provence Rose Miraval the best rosé wine in the world. The wine is "refined and elegant, offering pure and concentrated flavours of dried red berry, tangerine and melon," managing editor Kim Marcus writes. "The focused finish features flint and spice notes, with a hint of cream." A bottle retails for $28, for those looking to share in the celebration.

Adam Brody

Brody blindsides his girl with abrupt proposal

Former The O.C. star Adam Brody knows how to catch a girl off-guard. He reportedly blindsided girlfriend and former Gossip Girl star Leighton Meester with a marriage proposal, according to Star magazine. "Leighton and Adam are crazy about each other and have talked about getting married eventually," a source explains. "But she had no idea he would propose so soon. It was the surprise of her life and she's ecstatic. Right now their plan is to get married next summer. They are still deciding on (where to do it.)"

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Model call: Kloss is now in session

Vogue Paris named Karlie Kloss one of the top 30 models of the 2000s.
GETTY IMAGES

Over the buzz of the blow dryer, we caught up with supermodel Karlie Kloss behind-the-scenes of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. Wearing bell bottoms and a pink robe, Kloss was the picture of composure in her styling chair — a calm contrast to the frantic stylists and press running around the huge pink room. The newly 21-year-old Angel lets us in on her chopped locks and face favourites.

You debuted a drastic haircut last year. Are you planning on growing it out?
I am loving the short hair.

Eau de Cheveux

"When you're with a boy, it's always nice to have your hair smell good! It's better than perfume."
Karlie Kloss

That's the thing about a great cut — you don't have to style it. I find my short hair to be so much easier in the morning. And it's different for me. I've never done this before. Last year at this time was when I first cut it and shocked everyone. I've gotten used to it now and I really love it.

Any beauty tips or products you're loving?
There's this line that Victoria's Secret has called So Sexy that smells so good. There's something about the shampoo and the conditioner. When you're with a boy, it's always nice to have your hair smell good! It's better than perfume. I also love when I'm going out for a night and wearing a short dress, to put a little bit of olive oil on my hands, and put it onto my legs. I just rub it on my skin for a nice sheen. It looks really good and it photographs really nicely.

A merry makeover to everyone

At lash, my blush has come along. Dolce & Gabbana's makeup guru is all about bold as the weather gets cold

TINA CHADHA
Metro World News

Put your favourite orange lipstick away already: Dolce & Gabbana national makeup artist Christian McCulloch says that fall/winter is all about the richer tones, like fuchsia and burgundy.

To style the new bold pout, go easy on the eyes, he says.

"It's fresher without a heavy eye," says McCulloch. "A pale shadow, like a gold or champagne, is really pretty and easy, because it doesn't require precision. Just something shimmery across your eyelid with great lashes."

Christian McCulloch
CONTRIBUTED

But what's the makeup artist — who gets Scarlett Johansson and Michelle Williams red-carpet ready — really loving?

"My big thing at the moment is lashes and lips," says McCulloch. "Really amazing lashes, maybe with a winged eyeliner." He shows us how to create the look.

Create a cat-eye
"It's tricky," admits McCulloch. He suggests sketching out your line softly first with a pencil. "This is to see the angle, and to see how it looks with your eye open before you go in with a liquid applicator," he says. "If you paint a flick on an eye when it's closed, it can look a bit too horizontal when you open your eye. Look in the mirror and see where you want that flick, and then create a tiny dot with a pencil and paint from that dot down toward the corner of your lashes. I also take the pencil and run it along the inner rim of the eye, top and bottom. That'll create that (feline) Sophia Loren, Audrey Hepburn look."

Thick or thin?
"I like a thicker cat eye," says the artist. "Thick is cool; it makes it strong. It doesn't have to be Amy Winehouse-level, but that Kate Moss-y thing is nice."

Now for the cheeks
"I'm not one for heavy-duty cheek colour," says McCulloch. "But I do love to bring in bronzer to the cheek through winter. In winter, you want a little colour in your face too! Dolce & Gabbana has a bronzing colour called Desert, which I use for contouring. The two blush colours I use most are an apricot and a pale pink to create a soft flush on the cheek."

Party-ready
"I always like sparkle. Shimmery and metallic eye shadows are fun. Also, liquid liner is a great party look. I think a liner along the lash line and winged out is beautiful."

His must-haves

- **Dolce & Gabbana Passion Duo lipstick in Feminine.** "It's a pinky-brown with a little bit of shimmer in it." $35, saksfifthavenue.com

- **A good lip balm.** "Nuxe has a lovely, waxy honey lip balm, which is great conditioning for the winter." Nuxe Reve de Miel lip balm, $19, amazon.com

- **Dolce & Gabbana Passion Eyes mascara.** "The new mascara actually has a curling quality. We've all been quite shocked that it actually lifts and curls the lashes without having to use an eyelash curler prior." $32, sephora.com

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Canadian street style

Spotted in: Toronto

Name: Wendy

Dog: Artemis

Age: 26

Occupation: Social media manager

What she's wearing
Wren dress, J.Crew trench, G.H. Bass shoes, Stolen Riches laces, Hue tights, and Billykirk bag.

Her inspiration
"Kate Lanphear inspires me. Generally, I like to be understated and simple, but in the rare occasion, like this dress, I really love to wear crazy/wild patterns and textiles."

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Trends Report

Tired of the same old long hair styles? Have you considered rocking a pixie cut, like Hunger Games star Jennifer Lawrence? You may be nervous to take the bold snip but don't be! Go online to Trends Report to see how one woman transformed her long locks into a fierce pixie cut.

Follow Irene on twitter @MetroIreneK or on Instagram: kuanirene

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These days, it's common to transform a dull study into a kids' homework hub, says Pam Ginocchio, co-founder of the children's design blog Project Nursery. Above, a children's homework hub in New York City. GREG MCHALE/ON THE REAL/PROJECT NURSERY.COM

This book wall and reading nook are part of a kids' homework hub. Displaying books with the covers facing out helps entice young readers. PROJECTNURSERY.COM

All work and no fun makes for bad decor

Bonus rooms. Families are turning home offices into homework hubs, game rooms, dressing rooms or kids' theatres

Reinventing your office space

"Having this little bonus room almost gives you the excuse to go wild. You don't have to spend a ton of money or think, what's going to be my return on investment? It's a chance to have fun."

Pam Ginocchio, co-founder of the children's design blog Project Nursery

The home office, it seems, is going the way of the fax machine.

Interior designers say families are finding more inventive uses for their home's extra little rooms — optimistically called "bonus rooms" by real estate agents.

With the spread of wireless Internet and portable devices such as tablets, it's common now to send spreadsheets and emails from any room in the house, not to mention the nearest coffee shop. In fact, among major home-renovation projects, home-office improvements provide the puniest return on the investment when a home is resold, according to Remodeling magazine's 2013 Cost vs. Value report.

So instead of that dust-collecting desk, many families are seeking creative ways to customize these alcoves as game rooms, dressing rooms, small theatres and more.

"I get this question a lot," says Elizabeth Cb Marsh, an associate interior designer at Jenkins Baer Associates in Baltimore. "Especially in large, new-construction homes, there are these bonus rooms that are just there."

When her clients make over a pre-existing office, she usually recommends trying to preserve any built-in features, such as shelving or cabinetry. If the space is large enough, she says, one option is to create a billiards room. Find a small pool table to place in the centre of the room. If there's a wood counter, retrofit the top with a waterproof material such as stone for an elegant wet bar, and if you have the budget, install plumbing for a small sink. Add barstools, a high-top cocktail table and a pendant lamp over the pool table.

A smaller office can have a second life as a luxe dressing room, according to Marsh. Whether you draw inspiration from Downton Abbey or certain Beverly Hills housewives, the first step is to install a wall of shelving for shoes and clothes. Keep the decor minimalist, she advises, with a neutral paint colour, a pair of sconces, and a tufted ottoman in the centre of the room. Add a floor mirror and a vanity, and accessorize with vintage hatboxes, a dress form or an antique trunk. If the room has windows, be sure to hang light-filtering curtains to protect your clothing.

Families with children have even more options for converting an office space. These days, it is common to transform a dull study into a kids' homework hub, says Pam Ginocchio, co-founder of the children's design blog Project Nursery.

To begin, she recommends giving each kid a workspace: a small metal desk in a fun colour with a clip-on lamp and a comfy swivel chair. Create a comfortable reading nook on the floor with beanbags. Then mount floating shelves from floor to ceiling and display books with the covers facing out to entice young readers. Appoint one wall as a place for scribbling ideas or displaying schoolwork by applying a layer of magnet paint and then chalkboard paint from floor to ceiling.

Consider allowing a computer for older kids' homework, but try to banish video games and other distractions, says Project Nursery co-founder Melissa Fluhr, who stresses the value of a quiet, contemplative space.

If contemplative is not your family's speed, Fluhr suggests using the bonus room as an off-off-off-Broadway theatre. For a kid who likes to perform skits, play songs and choreograph dances, build a basic plywood stage in the corner of the room. Above that riser, hang a rounded shower-curtain rod and a pair of dark, tab-top curtains. Hang costumes and dress-up clothes in a cubby, and store puppets, musical instruments and other props in a toy chest. Finish by hanging a mirror at tyke height so children can watch themselves rehearse, and don't forget to add a few comfy chairs for the audience.

If your children have other obsessions, turn an undersized room into their special hangout. For example, if your child is into outer space, turn it into a mini planetarium with a dark-painted ceiling and a night-sky projector. Just be prepared to update the theme in a year or two when your child's interests inevitably leap to something else.

"Having this little bonus room almost gives you the excuse to go wild," Ginocchio says. "You don't have to spend a ton of money or think, 'What's going to be my return on investment?' It's a chance to have fun."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

I've got cabin fever

Baby, it's cold outside. Now that the summer cottage is a distant memory, warm up your space with these retro lodge accessories. They'll help take you back to the country.

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Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Iconic art, now available for the sofa. Charles Pachter Baywatch Pillow, $95, thebay.com.

Take a walk on the wild side — this rug combines style, whimsy and comfort underfoot. Tufted six by eight foot Ursine Rug, $1,000 US, anthropologie.com.

Dream of the slopes while you're eating breakfast. Retro Vinyl Ski Place Mat, $3.50, simons.ca.

From baking a cake to frying fish, cast iron is the little black dress of the kitchen. Lodge Cast Iron Grill Pan, $25, westelm.com.

Keep your electronics cozy yet stylish during the winter. Luxe Faux Fur iPad Case, $39 US, restorationhardware.com.

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Shopping for a mortgage? Rates aren't the only thing you need to ask about

Financial planning. First-time buyers should inquire about penalties for breaking the term, and know the impact of unsecured debts

Historically low mortgage rates are encouraging more people to enter the real estate market. While rates are important when it comes to buying a home, there are more questions first-time home buyers need to ask before they purchase.

The easiest thing to compare when shopping for a first mortgage is rates, but Ryan Mckinley, Vancity mortgage development manager, said they aren't the most important thing.

"Depending on how often people move or change jobs, you're not necessarily going to be in that mortgage for the entire term," said Mckinley. "While it seems like you are getting the best deal for you, you need to ask what the penalty will be if you break that term."

According to Mckinley, there are two standard penalties that are charged: A three-month interest penalty, which is fairly straightforward, as well as an interest rate differential. The penalties can be applied in different ways and by using different numbers.

Even though many homeowners may feel as if they will just be giving money to the bank, Mckinley said it's important to ask about the whole package, which could include profit-sharing options at credit unions.

A common mistake first-time home buyers make when they head into the market is being unaware of the impact of their unsecured debts, like car loans and leases.

"It's really interesting because you see the car commercials and they say $350 a month over a five-year period. It seems affordable, but you are using the same money that you need to qualify for a mortgage," said Mckinley.

"For example, if you're making $70,000 a year and you don't have many other unsecured debts you can afford about a $350,000 mortgage. If you then take on a $500-a-month car loan or car lease payment, the $350,000 you could have been approved for before has now reduced to $250,000."

Having a full picture of what you can afford compared to what you qualify for is important before a first-time homeowner pens the deal on a new home.

Mckinley said the fear of being mortgage poor can be avoided by doing some simple budgeting and planning before you purchase.

"When you sit down with the professional you're working with, calculate what the total cost is going to be, which could include your new mortgage, strata fees, property taxes and anything else you aren't paying now," he said.

"Find out what that total number is and compare that to the rent you may be paying now. Take that difference and start an automatic payment each month coming from your account that goes into a savings account so you can live with it each month to see what it is like to have those payments and see if it is comfortable.

"That does two things: Allowing you to know what it is like and creating a cushion for moving expenses."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Unsecured debts

"(You) see the car commercials and they say $350 a month over a five-year period. It seems affordable, but you are using the same money that you need to qualify for a mortgage."

Ryan Mckinley, Vancity mortgage development manager

The fear of being mortgage-poor can be avoided by doing some planning before you purchase. ISTOCK

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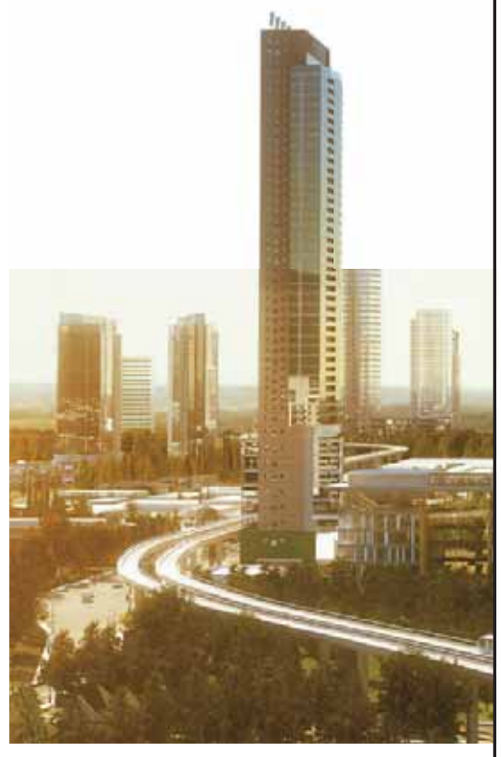

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If you're a first-time home plumber, research can help you decide whether you have the skills to tackle a project. ISTOCK

Flush your DIY fears down the toilet and fix those leaky pipes

Plumbing 101. With the advent of YouTube, it's become very easy to find instructional videos

Home plumbing projects can be successful if homeowners are willing to ask questions and gather information before taking on a do-it-yourself fix, says one expert.

John Gordon, chair of Camosun College's plumbing and pipe trades in Victoria, B.C., says the first step to tackling plumbing projects at home should be research.

Camosun College offers a homeowner plumbing course for the DIY crowd. But for those who don't have access to such a program, Gordon said there are easy ways to educate yourself before you take on a plumbing venture.

"They need to do a bunch of research if they are going to do the job themselves, and even if they are going to hire someone to do it. Homeowners should not just trust what someone else is telling them," he said. "Research was difficult before the Internet, but it's really easy now. We even show YouTube videos in class on how to do things like put a kitchen sink in."

While there is a wealth of information on the Internet, Gordon said the best information always comes from manufacturer documentation.

"If you are putting in a specific sink or faucet you should have the literature from the manufacturer and it will have step-by-step instructions," he said.

Oops!

"He put all the pipes together but forgot the glue, so everything leaked and we had to take it all down and start over."

John Gordon, chair of Camosun College's plumbing and pipe trades program in Victoria, B.C, on a DIY project gone wrong

Research is an important step in the successful completion of a plumbing project, and according to Gordon it is also a good way first-time home plumbers can assess whether they have the skills to finish the task.

"Everyone has a different level of comfort, so what I really think you need to do is do research and understand what needs to be done to finish the project and make a really good informed decision," he said. "If you have a good relationship with a contractor they can actually come in and take a look at it and give you some input on whether or not you can tackle it yourself."

In addition to being an instructor and chair of the department at Camosun, Gordon has worked in the field as a Red Seal certified plumber.

When Gordon is telling his students about home plumbing projects that have gone wrong, he often relays the story of a homeowner who re-did all the plumbing in his house but forgot to glue the pipes together.

"He put all the pipes together but forgot the glue, so everything leaked and we had to take it all down and start over," he said.

Homeowners can often tackle projects like basic bathroom renovations that involve switching fixtures, or replacing a kitchen sink, but if a project involves building permits, Gordon recommends hiring a professional.

Even though a homeowner may be bringing a plumber to help with a project, Gordon said research is still important.

"There are a lot of plumbers that aren't quite ready to do the job they are tackling," said Gordon. "If you've done your homework as a homeowner you know what should happen and if it isn't happening, ask questions. If you aren't getting quality answers, you can stop the job."

When hiring a plumber, Gordon said homeowners should ask about credentials.

"We're all licensed trades people but there is an apprenticeship process in place," he said. "You could hire a person who has the credential and is a journeyperson plumber, or someone who is working towards that as an apprentice, but you want to make sure they are heading towards that certification goal, whether they are heading towards it or have it."

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Energy-efficient decor

As temperatures drop and daylight is in shorter supply, we fight back: We crank up the heat in our homes and turn on lights earlier and earlier. And yet we also want to keep our heating and electric bills as low as we can. Can you keep your home warm and inviting all winter while still conserving energy? Here, three home design experts offer advice on how to keep things cosy while minimizing energy use this winter. Their suggestions range from the traditional (there's a reason why your grandmother hung those heavy curtains in winter) to the high-tech, including a thermostat that can talk to your iPad.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ditch the old light bulbs

Maxwell Ryan, founder of the popular home decor website ApartmentTherapy.com, is a designer. John Colaneri, co-host of HGTV's Kitchen Cousins, is a construction expert who builds and remodels homes. Both offer identical pieces of advice about staying warm while conserving power and saving money: Swap out your old incandescent bulbs (and those swirly compact fluorescent bulbs, too) for the new Cree brand LED bulbs. "They can last longer than 10 years and they use 84 per cent less energy than incandescents," Ryan says. "They also are dimmable" and give a warm-looking light — a big change from the energy-saving compact fluorescents. According to Ryan, the LED bulbs save you so much on electricity that they'll pay for themselves within a year, but will last about nine more years.

Swap out old bulbs like these CFLs, and replace them with Cree brand LED bulbs. ISTOCK

Light the fire

Crackling flames in an indoor fireplace can change the feel of a room instantly. And outdoors, they bring a welcome infusion of heat and light to a winter evening.

"Outdoor fireplaces are increasingly more and more popular, coast to coast," Flynn says. "They're not all that much of an expense like an outdoor kitchen would be."

If you're building a new outdoor fireplace, leave ample room for seating. "Many times homeowners have outdoor fireplaces built, but there's only enough room for a small table or two chairs. What's the point, people? The whole idea is to gather and stay cosy outdoors," Flynn says. He suggests planning "at least 12-by-14 feet of space around the front of the fireplace to ensure a sofa and loveseat as well as a coffee table and end tables will fit."

This wood burning fireplace is energy efficient and will still keep the area warm should electricity be lost during ice storms or snow storms. BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/HAYNEEDLE.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Try new tech

Colaneri and Ryan also both advise homeowners to replace old thermostats with new Nest brand models. "They take 30 per cent off your bill each month," Colaneri says. "And they look very high-tech and cool to display."

Nests are programmable "learning thermostats," which means they track your habits and adjust accordingly. They also connect via Wi-Fi to check weather reports online, and you can control them remotely from an iPad.

There is new outdoor technology as well. On your deck or patio, Flynn suggests adding a new propane-powered space heater. The newest models are cost-effective and stylish, says Flynn, executive producer of HGTV.com's Holiday House.

"They look like modern sculptures," says Flynn, "and many of them are under $500. To ensure my outdoor spaces stay warm during the winter, I keep modern, seven-foot tall space heaters in my covered outdoor living room. They're on wheels, so it's easy to move them around to wherever people are seated. And once lit, the glass tubes, which contain the flame from the propane tank, put on a gorgeous show."

Flynn keeps sculptural outdoor heaters standing by his covered outdoor living and dining spaces. BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/HAYNEEDLE.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Embrace upholstery

Warm, cosy upholstery fabrics work on a practical level by holding your warmth when you touch or sit on them. But Ryan points out that they also work visually: A room full of soft, warm fabrics will give you a psychological sense of warmth that adds to your enjoyment.

So add thick throw blankets to chairs and sofas, and swap out silk-covered pillows and even lampshades for ones covered in thicker, nubbier fabrics like muslin and burlap.

Ryan also recommends using thick curtains in winter. A decade ago, he says, "curtains were considered fusty and old-fashioned and expensive." But with so many beautiful, inexpensive curtains available today, they've become popular again.

Besides adding colour or a bold pattern to a room, curtains also block cold air that might leak in around windows. And they muffle sound from outside, which Ryan says helps make rooms feel more insulated in winter. "Curtains," he says, "aren't just for your grandparents anymore."

The same technique can help warm up outdoor spaces. Designer Brian Patrick Flynn recommends Sunbrella's outdoor velveteen fabric for chairs and sofas. He also likes thick, woven blends.

To ensure the outdoor living space of his mountain house stays warm and welcoming during the colder months, designer Brian Patrick Flynn chose woven-blend upholstery for his seating. BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/HAYNEEDLE.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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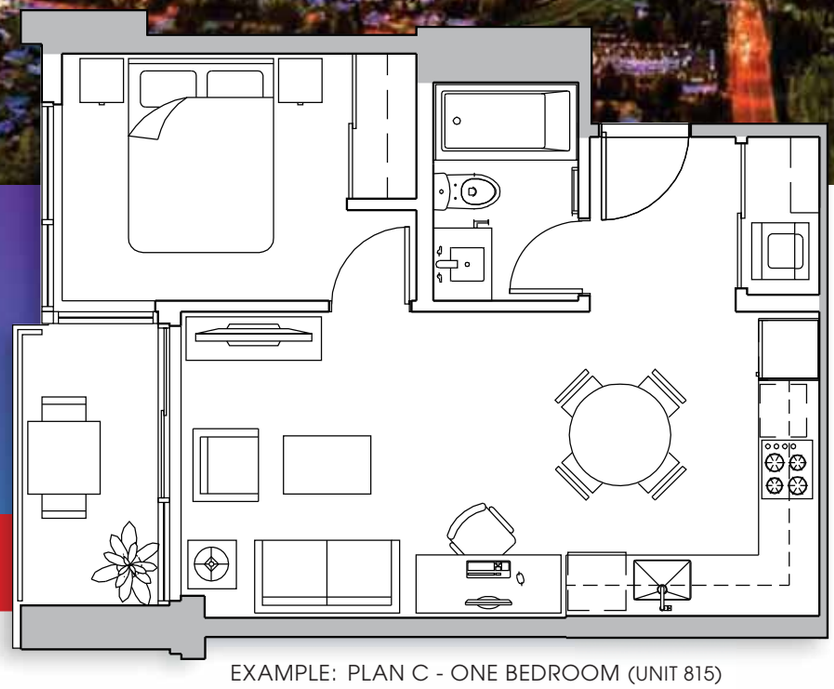

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Large format art on a budget

In his new book, Freakin' Fabulous on a Budget, style guru Clinton Kelly shares his secrets for making every part of your life more fabulous — whether you want to make over your wardrobe, add glamour to your next soiree or brighten up a dingy bathroom. The co-host of ABC's The Chew and TLC's What Not to Wear believes you can look like you have it all, even if there's no room in your budget. Here, in one of the DIY projects from the book, he explains how to put together a high-impact piece of artwork for your walls (including a completely brilliant idea for a cost-effective picture frame).

If you frequent expensive hotels with all the dough you've saved by following my advice in this book, notice what's going on with the walls. Hotels can't put a piece of original artwork on every wall.

It's too expensive, and rowdy patrons may try to stash it in their carry-on luggage upon checkout. Instead of taking this risk, smarty-pants hotel interior designers just frame beautiful pieces of fabric or wallpaper.

To buy large-scale art is very often cost-prohibitive. I'm talking thousands of dollars. And the truth of the matter is, beautiful art is accessible to us almost every day. Fabric and wallpaper is artwork for the masses and it's affordable. Real-life artists create the patterns! Now, go find a beautiful piece of fabric that you love, and take charge of your decor!

The custom frame is just the molding usually found along the floors and ceilings of homes. Seven feet of basic molding like we've used here costs $6 or $7 at home improvement stores.

EXCERPTED FROM FREAKIN' FABULOUS ON A BUDGET BY CLINTON KELLY. COPYRIGHT © 2013 BY CLINTON KELLY. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM GALLERY, A DIVISION OF SIMON & SCHUSTER, INC.

What you need for the project

Materials: Fabric or wallpaper, measuring tape, scissors, level, pencil, molding, staple gun, hammer, nails, mitre saw

Affix the fabric to the wall

Begin by choosing the area on your wall you want to cover, then measure and cut the fabric accordingly. Using a level and pencil, mark off where the fabric should be affixed. Using a staple gun or hammer and nails, affix the fabric to the wall. It is easiest to affix the top edge of the fabric first, then align the sides and bottom accordingly.

Add the molding

Measure and cut the molding into four pieces with a mitre saw, so the edges are diagonal and will fit together in a frame around the fabric. Using a level, place the molding onto the wall so it covers the raw edge of the fabric. Nail the molding to the wall. Wow! Wow! Wow!

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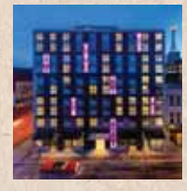
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Sometimes an opportunity comes along that you don't see every day. For those who want to own a home downtown, that opportunity is at Pacific Point, a condo development in the heart of Yaletown.

"Buyers can save up to $50,000 on selected homes for a limited time," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Bosa Development, the developer of Pacific Point, adding that the initiative is being offered until Saturday.

"There are fewer than 30 homes left for sale," Murrell says. "And they're move-in ready now."

The homes at the development have sold quickly because Bosa was able to set them at a uniquely low price point, she says.

The reason? Although Pacific Point's interiors are brand new, the tower itself isn't. Nat Bosa, owner of Bosa Development, bought an existing building and renovated it top to bottom to create homes that were completely modern, but in a building that didn't need to be built anew, literally from the ground up.

"Our prices are about 10 per cent less than equivalent condos in Yaletown for that reason," Murrell says.

"Buyers also don't have to pay GST, so that also helps to keep the cost attainable."

The 28-storey tower, on Homer Street just north of Pacific Boulevard, has 214 units including studios, one bedroom and dens, junior two bedroom and dens, two bedroom and dens, and penthouse suites. Sizes range from 448 to 1,678 square feet. Prices start at $344,900.

Bosa is doing its utmost to protect buyers and reassure them of the reliability of their purchase. The company is offering a 2-5-10 insurance policy with WBI Home Warranty Ltd.

"We want our residents to have a long-term future here," Murrell says.

For more information, please visit pacificpointcondos.com.

CONTRIBUTED

NEIGHBOURHOOD APPEALS TO FAMILIES

Pacific Point condos are spacious, convenient and affordable — perfect for young families. But it's not just the condos themselves that are attracting young parents to buy at the development. The neighbourhood has equal appeal.

"Pacific Point is in this quiet pocket of downtown that allows residents to relax and get away from the noise and bustle just a block away," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Bosa Development, the developer of Pacific Point.

A new school under development in Yaletown will give the neighbourhood's elementary school capacity a significant boost. The $16.5-million school on Yaletown's Expo Boulevard is set to open in 2015 and will accommodate 500 students. It's news that parents in Yaletown are rejoicing over, Murrell says.

"The new elementary school has wonderful implications for our buyers who are current parents or parents-to-be. But it's also a sign that the neighbourhood is diversifying, becoming more family friendly, and garnering public and private investment. It's a great place to buy, and a great place to live."

Whether residents have kids or not, the neighbourhood couldn't possibly provide more accessibility to grocery shopping, dining and entertainment. All the essentials are within walking distance.

"Yaletown is for anyone who loves having that access to downtown, but also enjoys owning in a new development, and having access to all the newness and great civic design the area is known for," Murrell says.

"There's always something going on, whether it's a cultural event at the Roundhouse Community Centre, a free concert or kids' event at David Lam Park, or dinner with your friends and family at one of the area's great restaurants."

CONTRIBUTED

NEW FEATURES

Pacific Point isn't just a pretty face. Each unit is new inside and professionally interior designed.

The high-quality features available in each home include flooring in laminate wood, porcelain tile and deep, durable carpet.

Quality kitchens feature sleek Armony Cucine cabinetry, a quartz slab backsplash, polished quartz countertops and stainless steel, undermounted sinks.

When residents have a chance to look up from feeling like a fabulous chef in their fabulous kitchen, the panoramic vistas from many of the homes feature stunning views of False Creek, David Lam Park and city lights.

When residents want to get a workout, Pacific Point's amenity space offers an exclusive lap pool, hot tub and sauna, a fitness studio, yoga area, and his and hers change rooms. There is no need to leave the building.

For group parties, or for a chance to get to know your neighbours, the residents' lounge includes a flat-screen TV and a pool table.

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A low in calories and fat chocolatey peanut butter indulgence? Rejoice!

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

Peanut butter, cheesecake and chocolate flavours combine to make this an outstanding, decadent dessert. I keep the fat and calories down by using a combination of ricotta and light cream cheese and more cocoa powder than chocolate.

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly coat a 9-inch springform pan with cooking spray.

2. To make the brownie layer beat together the sugar, oil, egg and vanilla in a bowl. In another bowl, stir together the flour, cocoa and baking powder. Stir the wet mixture into the dry mixture just until combined. Stir in the sour cream and chocolate chips. Pour the mixture into the pan.

3. To make the cheesecake layer combine the ricotta, sugar, cream cheese, sour cream, peanut butter, egg, flour and vanilla in a food processor. Process until smooth. Pour the mixture on top of the brownie layer.

4. Bake the cheesecake in the centre of the oven for 35 minutes. The brownie layer may rise slightly around the edges. Chill before serving. Decorate with the icing sugar (with optional chocolate sauce and toasted peanuts).

THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN.

Ingredients

Brownie Layer
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Cheesecake Layer
- 1 1/2 cups reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup softened reduced-fat cream cheese
- 1/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/3 cup smooth natural peanut butter
- 1 large egg
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- icing sugar for decoration

Peanut Butter Brownie Cheesecake

This recipe serves 12 and is 304 calories and 14 grams of fat per serving. ROSE REISMAN

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MLB

Source says Fielder traded by Tigers

A person with knowledge of the deal says the Detroit Tigers and Texas have agreed to a trade that would send slugger Prince Fielder to the Rangers for second baseman Ian Kinsler. The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tennis

Bouchard named newcomer of 2013

Canadian Eugenie Bouchard is the WTA's newcomer of the year after reaching at least the quarter-finals five times in the 2013 season.

The 19-year-old Montreal native is ranked No. 32 in the world, tops among teenagers and Canadians. She reached her first WTA final in Osaka last month. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Pens hand Capitals punishment

Seeing the Pittsburgh Penguins hasn't been a good thing for the Washington Capitals for a long time.

Beyond the one-sided playoff history of the rivalry, the Penguins have recently had the Capitals' number. That continued Wednesday night with a 4-0 blowout victory, their fifth straight win in the series.

Pittsburgh (14-8-0) maintained first place in the Metropolitan Division on the strength of goals by Paul Martin, Beau Bennett, Sidney Crosby and James Neal. Marc-Andre Fleury made 18 saves for the shutout. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Patience key in Lang's comeback

Soccer. The midfielder-striker will not play for Canada in Sunday's friendly against Mexico

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Kara Lang has learned the hard way about the virtue of patience.

It won't be easy, but she knows she'll need to exercise every bit of it in the days, weeks and months leading up to the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015.

Lang, who tore her anterior cruciate ligament on two separate occasions earlier in her career and — at just 24 years of age — announced her retirement as an active player in January of 2011, began her comeback to the pitch earlier this year.

She was named to the 23-person roster for Canada's women's national team in its friendly against Mexico at BC Place Stadium on Sunday.

On Wednesday, head coach John Herdman told reporters in a conference call that Lang would not be available for selection in the upcoming match.

"Kara's part of a long-term process," said Herdman.

After her initial retirement, Lang worked as a soccer analyst for Sportsnet.

But her competitive side still remains.

"I feel like I still have something left to give," said Lang, who has scored 34 goals in her time with Canada's national squad.

Herdman feels the same way.

Kara Lang was named to the roster for Canada's friendly against Mexico on Sunday. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Canada vs. Mexico

The Canadian Soccer Association said prior to Wednesday's conference call with coach John Herdman that 17,000 tickets have been sold for Sunday's friendly against Mexico at BC Place Stadium.

- Like the Whitecaps, the seating configuration remains in the lower bowl of the stadium.
- Kickoff is at 1 p.m. PT, two hours before the start of the Canadian Football League's Grey Cup game in Regina.

Her previous ability to capitalize on her chances is a tantalizing quality for the Canadian side, which is coming off a bronze-medal finish in the 2012 Olympics.

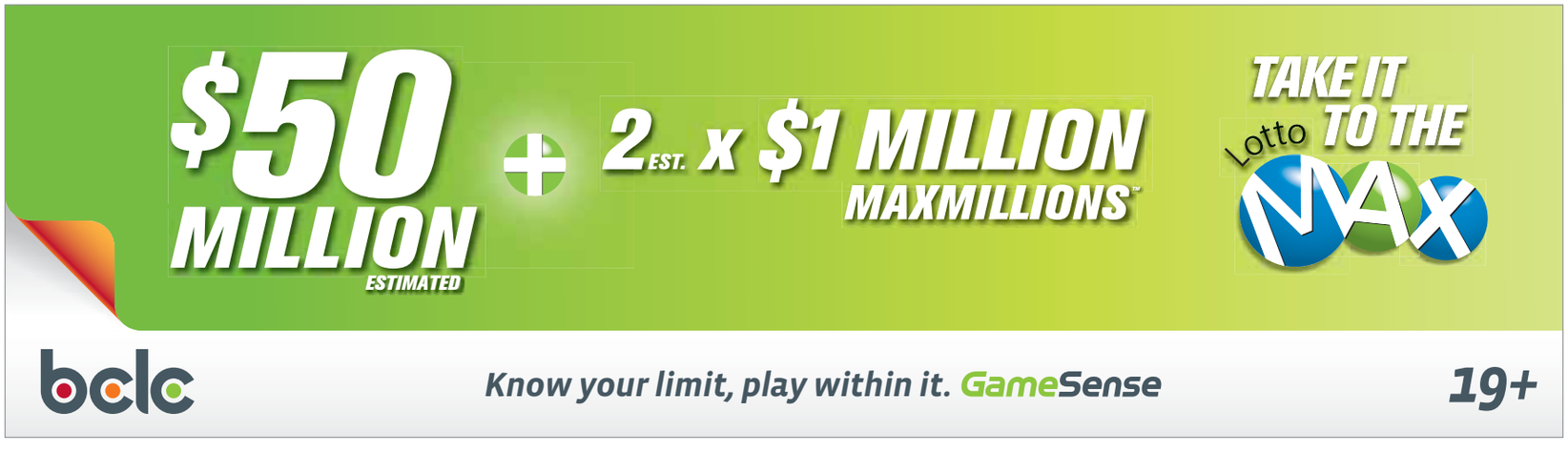
"Look, I think Kara, she's got goals in her," said Herdman.

Here's where patience kicks in.

Lang is in the midst of a physical rebuild. She is literally learning how to run again, watching her form and technique on film and making adjustments to wipe away what she called "bad habits" and overcompensation to make up for injuries or pain she was working through.

"This is certainly the most mentally challenging thing I've ever taken on," she said.

4 SPORTS



2 heads not better than 1 in Vancouver

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Ronnie Shuker
vancouver@metronews.ca

Debates swirl daily among The Hockey News staff. Most arguments die quickly, but a few develop into doozies. And a recent one about goalies had the newsroom split in half.

Which is better: A clear-cut No. 1 backed by a capable No. 2, or a 1A-1B duo with each vying to be 'The Guy'? It was a stalemate at our office in Toronto. But one thing is for sure — there's no debate in Vancouver. The Canucks tried going with a two-headed monster and it proved an outstanding failure.

The stats say it worked just fine. Cory Schneider posted No. 1-type numbers, and Roberto Luongo put up decent digits the past couple seasons, but the circus that followed took a well-documented toll.

Not so in 2013-14. With

Roberto Luongo and Eddie Lack represent a more stable goalie situation than the circus of the previous few seasons. GETTY IMAGES

Schneider in New Jersey, Luongo and Eddie Lack have given Vancouver reliable, distraction-free goaltending through the first quarter. Luongo's 2.33 goals-against average, .914 save percentage and Lack's 2.41 GAA and .911 SP are middling, but they've been as steady as a station wagon and should get better. Luongo is a perennially poor starter. And Lack will likely improve as he eases into his first NHL season, made more comfortable with a shiny new two-year, $2.3-million deal signed last week.

The team is now a relatively drama-free zone, at least in comparison to the Schneider-Luongo sideshow. No soap operas, no trade watch — just good goaltending.

The Sedins have been signed long-term, so that potential powder keg has been diffused. Sure, there's the John Tortorella watch, with the media wondering when he will crack, but for the most part, gossip has been hard to come by and good on the team for finally making it that way.

It took GM Mike Gillis two years too long to conclude what many had figured out long ago — that two No. 1 heads are not better than one in Vancouver — but at least that misstep is fixed and the Canucks can focus on hockey instead of hearsay.

MLS

Reo-Coker turns heads in 1st season

The Vancouver Whitecaps' Nigel Reo-Coker was named a finalist for the MLS Newcomer of the Year award Wednesday.

The veteran midfielder signed with the Whitecaps in February, after playing in the English Premier League. He recorded a goal and four assists with Vancouver.

Jose Goncalves of New England and Diego Valeri of Portland are also finalists for the award to be announced Dec. 4. METRO

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	21	14	6	1	59	38	29
Tampa Bay	21	14	7	0	66	55	28
Toronto	21	13	7	1	62	49	27
Detroit	22	9	6	7	54	62	25
Montreal	22	11	9	2	58	47	24
Ottawa	22	8	10	4	63	71	20
Florida	22	6	12	4	49	72	16
Buffalo	23	5	17	1	42	72	11

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	22	14	8	0	63	48	28
Washington	22	12	9	1	69	63	25
NY Rangers	21	10	11	0	43	52	20
Carolina	21	8	9	4	40	59	20
New Jersey	20	7	8	5	42	49	19
NY Islanders	22	8	11	3	63	73	19
Philadelphia	20	8	10	2	40	50	18
Columbus	21	7	11	3	52	64	17

Wednesday's results
Minnesota 4 Ottawa 3
Pittsburgh 4 Washington 0
New Jersey at Anaheim
Columbus at Calgary
Tuesday's results
Toronto 5 NY Islanders 2
Nashville 2 Detroit 0
St. Louis 4 Buffalo 1
Edmonton 7 Columbus 0
Florida 3 Vancouver 2 (SO)
Colorado 5 Chicago 1
Los Angeles 5 Tampa Bay 2
Philadelphia 5 Ottawa 2
Montreal 6 Minnesota 2
Boston 2 NY Rangers 1

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	22	14	4	4	79	66	32
Minnesota	23	14	5	4	61	53	32
St. Louis	20	14	3	3	70	47	31
Colorado	20	15	5	0	64	42	30
Dallas	20	11	7	2	58	56	24
Winnipeg	23	10	10	3	61	66	23
Nashville	21	10	9	2	48	63	22

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	23	15	6	2	72	59	32
San Jose	21	13	3	5	72	50	31
Phoenix	21	14	4	3	73	66	31
Los Angeles	22	15	6	1	63	48	31
Vancouver	23	11	8	4	58	61	26
Calgary	21	7	11	3	59	79	17
Edmonton	23	6	15	2	60	83	14

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Thursday's games — All times Eastern
St. Louis at Boston, 7 p.m.
Nashville at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Carolina at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
NY Rangers at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Colorado at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Florida at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
New Jersey at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.
Tampa Bay at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.
Friday's games
Montreal at Washington, 7 p.m.
NY Islanders at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Florida at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Anaheim, 10 p.m.
Columbus at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

MLS PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

(2-game series; aggregate goals)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

KANSAS CITY VS HOUSTON
Leg 2 — Saturday's game
Houston at Kansas City, 7:30 p.m.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

SALT LAKE VS PORTLAND
Leg 2 — Sunday's game
Salt Lake at Portland, 9 p.m.

CFL PLAYOFFS

GREY CUP

Sunday's game — All times Eastern
Hamilton at Saskatchewan, 6 p.m.

DIVISION FINALS

EAST DIVISION
Sunday's result
Hamilton 36 Toronto 24

WEST DIVISION
Sunday's result
Saskatchewan 35 Calgary 13

NFL

Thursday's game — All times Eastern
New Orleans at Atlanta, 8:25 p.m.
Sunday's games
Minnesota at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at Houston, 1 p.m.
San Diego at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
Chicago at St. Louis, 1 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Detroit, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
Carolina at Miami, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Oakland, 4:05 p.m.
Indianapolis at Arizona, 4:05 p.m.
Dallas at N.Y. Giants, 4:25 p.m.
Denver at New England, 8:30 p.m.
Monday's game
San Francisco at Washington, 8:40 p.m.

NBA

Wednesday's results
Miami 120 Orlando 92
Toronto 108 Philadelphia 98
Washington 98 Cleveland 91
Indiana 103 New York 96 (OT)
Charlotte 95 Brooklyn 91
Atlanta 93 Detroit 85
L.A. Clippers 102 Minnesota 98
Portland 91 Milwaukee 82
New Orleans 105 Utah 98
San Antonio 104 Boston 93
Sacramento 113 Phoenix 106
Houston at Dallas
Memphis at Golden State
Tuesday's results
Washington 104 Minnesota 100
Miami 104 Atlanta 88
Detroit 92 New York 86
Houston 109 Boston 85
Sacramento 107 Phoenix 104
Thursday's games — All times Eastern
L.A. Clippers at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Denver, 10:30 p.m.
Friday's games
Milwaukee at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Phoenix at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Washington at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Indiana at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Brooklyn at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Cleveland at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Utah at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Chicago at Portland, 10 p.m.
Golden State at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
If your instincts tell you to follow a path you would not normally take, do so without hesitation. The Sun's imminent change of sign promises all wonderful adventures for you over the coming four weeks.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You will do what is expected of you today but that does not mean you are obligated to do favours for everyone. The most useful thing you can learn over the next 24 hours is to say "no".

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Loved ones may have found it hard to put their feelings into words in recent weeks but as of tomorrow, they will make up for it. They will come right out and tell you how they feel.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You have started many new projects in recent weeks but now you must ask yourself what you are hoping to achieve. Do you really need to work on so many things at once? You know the answer.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If a project you had high hopes for does not seem to be working, end it. That may sound drastic but as the Sun is about to move into the most dynamic area of your chart you don't have time to waste on failures.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may find it hard to let your hair down over the next few days. Take it as a sign that you have important tasks to perform. You will know when it's time for fun and games.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
A minor argument has been blown out of all proportion and now people who were once your friends can hardly bring themselves to say hello. It's up to you to end this stupidity.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may find it hard to get along with people today, especially if you have doubts they are on your side. Are you right to be suspicious or is your mind playing tricks? You can't know, so don't take chances.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You have sacrificed so much in recent weeks and now there is nothing left to give. That's OK. Tomorrow the tide will turn in your favour and it will be you who receives so many amazing things from the universe.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
In the greater scheme of things, everything happens for a reason and if you keep your eyes and ears open today it's possible that you may catch a glimpse of the grand design.

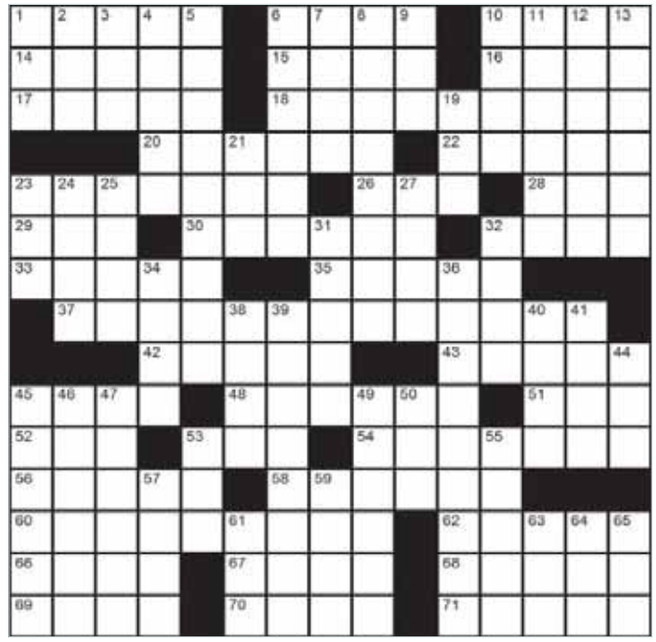
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your aim now must be to make friends, make plans and make the most of your talents. It does not matter what other people expect of you, it matters only what you expect of yourself.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may not be aggressive by nature but as the Sun approaches the career angle of your chart today and tomorrow you will certainly be assertive. What is it you desire the most? Take it. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



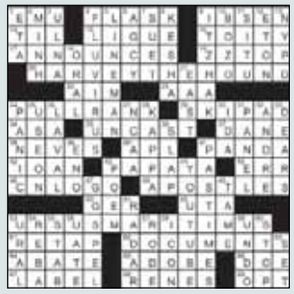
Across

1. Comic legend Ms. Burnett
6. Li'l drill instructors
10. Rake's spot
14. 'River Horse', commonly
15. Q. "How do you spell the synonym for 'Precedence'?" A. "P-r-_-_-_-t-y."
16. Ms. Dunham
17. Job type, __. Asst.
18. The Liberals, colloquially: 2 wds.
20. Where Kampala is the capital city
22. '60s abstractionism: 2 wds.
23. PEI: __ Island Provincial Park
26. Yellowknife's locale, for short
28. The Lion
29. Caesar's 106
30. Crop up
32. Port of Yemen
33. When repeated with Zou, French tune Canadian actress Jessica Pare sang on "Mad Men"
35. Island near the Statue of Liberty
37. Hagar The Horrible's family wears these: 2 wds.
42. Honolulu hello
43. Swerved
45. With competence
48. Kilroy's Mr.
51. Bio info
52. Sorrow
53. "Dallas" character
54. La Compagnie de la Baie _'__
56. __ Test Dummies
58. Withstand
60. Schmoozer's greetings: 2 wds.
62. Pondered
66. Say it's nay
67. Buckeye State
68. Keen
69. Celtic language
70. "Because of partner / Take my hand..." goes this Leonard Cohen tune: 3 wds.
38. Ms. Ephron
39. CBC personality Jian
40. Poetic contraction
41. Kind of lily
44. Hideaway
45. Canuck band, __ Fire
46. Bone-holding digging dog
47. Gains knowledge
49. __-__ favourite
50. Pre-Fri. day, variantly
53. Greek letter
55. Two
57. Canadian singer Ms. Sweetnam
59. No: German
61. Plant seeds
63. "How ya doin'?"
64. Airport posting, for short
65. Benicio __ Toro
71. Tibet's neighbour

Down

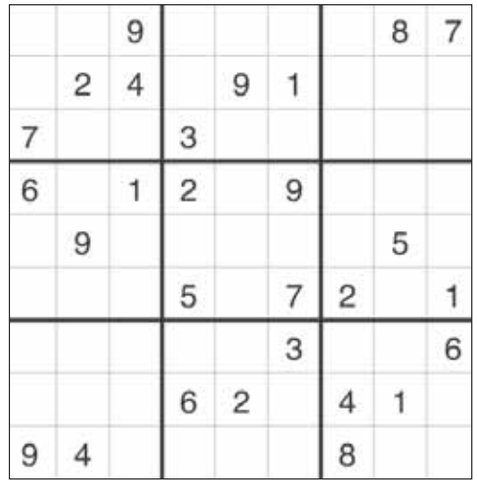
1. Pussycat Dolls hit: "Don't __"
2. Care
3. Circling stat.
4. Yves Saint Laurent perfume
5. Quebec's fifth largest city
6. John Hancock, in 1776
7. Tragically Hip's Mr. Downie
8. The Bermuda __
9. Kennel command
10. "__ Shot" (1977)
11. Joyfully ring in
12. Menu meal
13. __, Ohio
19. Stove topper
21. Strong-__
23. Banned pollutant, commonly
24. Tel __
25. Inconclusive
27. Water source
31. Sobering spot for celebs
32. Voyaging on the ocean
34. Approve
36. "If you want a __-Dixie" (2005)

Yesterday's Crossword

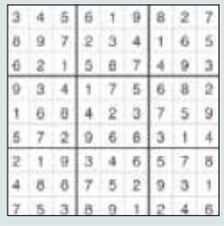


Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku



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